



The Honorable President and Members  
of the Baltimore City Council  
Room 409, City Hall  
100 N. Holiday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear President and City Council Members,

***22-0104R- Informational Hearing - Degree Requirements for City Positions***

This purpose of this hearing is for the City Solicitor, the City Administrator, the Director of the Baltimore City Department of Human Resources, the Baltimore City Labor Commissioner, and the Director of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development to brief the City Council regarding the practice of requiring certain degrees for certain City positions and to discuss if eliminating such a degree requirement would be detrimental or beneficial to the recruitment and retention of quality City employees.

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) coordinates and directs workforce development initiatives responsive to the needs of Baltimore City employers and job seekers in order to enhance and promote the local economy. Our vision is for all city residents to maximize their career potential, and all employers to have the human resources to grow and prosper.

A recent survey by public sector retirement management company, Mission Square Retirement, described public sector recruiting as "difficult," particularly in health care, corrections, and policing, skilled trades and engineering.

The survey noted that public sector employers are in competition with private sector firms who often have more ability to offer higher wages in and benefits.

The study also found that the high number of retirements caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the large number of job openings, making it even more imperative that governments attract more workers. Some governments also have gone to remote work or split schedules to accommodate workers.

In March, Maryland became the first state to announce the elimination of degree requirements for positions including information technology, customer service and administration. Applicants are able to substitute relevant work experience, military training or community college or other educational courses.

In Baltimore City, only 30% of residents have a college or advanced degrees. By eliminating unnecessary and outdated degree requirements, Baltimore City can open itself up to a larger talent pool and provide more opportunities to its residents to obtain meaningful employment.

Additionally, According to the nonprofit group Opportunity at Work, which advocates for minorities and people who come to work with varied backgrounds, some 51% of Black workers, 55% of Hispanic workers, 66% of rural workers of all races and 61% of veterans are Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STAR), which include military service, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and community college programs—to take the place of a four-year college degree. Removing unnecessary degree requirements and remaining a City that is committed to equity, while positively impact the number of job opportunities and leadership positions for people of color.

MOED is in support of City Council bill- ***22-0104R- Informational Hearing - Degree Requirements for City Positions.***

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason Perkins-Cohen".

Jason Perkins-Cohen  
Director