



January 24, 2023

To the Honorable City Council President, Nick Mosby and
Members of the Baltimore City Council
City Hall, Room 400

Re: 22-0136R-Informational Hearing - Status of the Baltimore City Municipal Identification Card Program

The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA) is herein reporting on City Council Bill 22-0136R-Informational Hearing - Status of the Baltimore City Municipal Identification Card Program.

The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA) supports the implementation of a Municipal Identification Card for vulnerable populations facing obstacles to obtaining secure and recognizable identification due to immigrant status, unstable housing, gender identity, and other barriers.

In 2018, MIMA was invited to participate in program design sessions led by the Mayor's Office and Government Relations and Baltimore City Information Technology (formerly known as the Mayor's Office of Information Technology). During these sessions, MIMA provided the following recommendations to ensure a successful implementation process that was inclusive of immigrant communities:

- Assess demand for the card to make it widely appealing. Conduct listening tours and focus group sessions in multiple languages to ensure that those who most stand to benefit from the ID are involved in the program from the beginning. The sessions would also help determine how many people need a Municipal ID.
- Confidentiality and Security. Ensuring that required information is kept confidential is critical for vulnerable populations such as undocumented immigrants. Based on best practices, supporting documents are never stored to protect the applicant's application. In addition, the program should not collect information such as immigrant status, country of origin, or social security number, as these can serve as an identifier for a person without immigrant status.
- Messaging and Communications. Messaging about the program should focus on the needs of underserved vulnerable communities who do not have access to identification. Any messaging should avoid promoting the program solely for undocumented individuals. Without the proper protections, the program can become a database subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
- Language Access: The program must have resources to assist Limited English Proficient (LEP) residents. To that end, program and marketing materials should be translated into the city's core languages. In addition, staff should be trained on language access, cultural sensitivity, and ways to assist (LEP) residents.

MIMA is committed to supporting the implementation of a Municipal ID program for vulnerable populations. For this work, MIMA can facilitate immigrant community engagement, participate in program design meetings, help with multilingual messaging and communication, provide language access resources, and develop strategies to enhance trust in the program. We look forward to attending the hearing and answering any questions the Council may have.

Sincerely,

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