


FROM	Name & Title	Mary H. Talley <i>Mary H. Talley</i> Director & Chief Human Capital Officer	CITY OF BALTIMORE MEMO 
	Agency Name & Address	Department of Human Resources 201 E. Baltimore Street, Suite 300	
	Subject	CITY COUNCIL BILL #18-0223 / EQUITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM	

TO The Honorable Bernard "Jack" Young and
Members of the Baltimore City Council
City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street, Room 409
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

DATE June 11, 2018

The Department of Human Resources ("DHR") reviewed and considered the above captioned City Council Bill. DHR understands and recognizes the role that historic policy and planning decisions has played in creating and exacerbating inequity and inequality in Baltimore City. Moreover, DHR appreciates the Council's attempt to address systemic inequalities through its legislative powers. Still, this legislation is overly broad and needs further examination and discussion of the scope, oversight, and enforcement authority of any designated Office or Agency in addressing any and all city policies, programs, or practices that have or will have a negative disparate outcome relative to individuals, based upon their race, gender, or income. While there is historical precedent for Equity programs within federal, state and local government agencies, it is not clear which proven best practices informed the proposed codification of the Equity Assessment Program ("EAP"). With substantial amendments to various provisions of the legislation and the development of an inter-agency working group to address key areas of concern, DHR **supports** the Bill.

This bill anticipates the creation of an Equity Assessment Program ("EAP"), designed to empower and require the City's Director of Planning to: (1) identify and rectify current and proposed City policy and practices that have yielded and may yield disparate outcomes, based upon race, gender or income and (2) take pro-active steps via city policy and practice to prevent future disparate outcomes from resulting to individuals based upon race, gender or income.

Oversight and enforcement authority should be assigned either to one of three existing agencies -- DHR, Legislative Reference, or the Office of Civil Rights and Wage Enforcement --- or to a newly created Mayor's Office of Equity, Assessment, and Inclusion. Currently, within DHR, there is a Policy and Compliance division, which focuses primarily on drafting, implementing, and auditing City-wide HR policies and practices to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local government laws and regulations, including anti-discrimination laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA).

Any designated Agency to be contemplated and designated by this legislation will require an appropriate level of staff, resources, and expertise to carry out its functions, because essential to its effectiveness are its abilities to research best practices; build and launch a valid and reliable model for assessment; make recommendations across agencies; monitor and maintain reporting and corrective actions; and drive outcomes.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (410) 396-1565.