



FROM	Name & Title	Steve Sharkey, Director 	CITY OF BALTIMORE MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Department of General Services 800 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	Subject	SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT – City Council Bill 18-0223 – Equity Assessment Program		

TO: The Honorable Council President and Members
of the Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee
100 N. Holliday Street, City Hall, Room 409
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

DATE: June 11, 2018

Re: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT for City Council Bill 18-0223 – Equity Assessment Program

Dear Council President Young, Chairman Eric Costello and Members of the Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee:

The Department of General Services **supports with amendments** City Council Bill 18-0223 – Equity Assessment Program as introduced by Councilmember Brandon Scott per the Department of Planning’s recommendations. CCB 18-0223 purposes the development and implementation of an Equity Assessment Program, requiring City agencies to assess existing and proposed policies and practices for disparate outcomes based on race, gender, or income and to proactively develop policies, practices, and investments to prevent and redress disparate outcomes.

The department supports performing a systemic process of identifying policies and practices that may be implemented to identify and redress disparate outcomes on the basis of race, gender, or income. The equity assessments can be used to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences in a variety of contexts, including the analysis of proposed policies, institutional practices, programs, plans and budgetary decisions. These assessments can be a vital tool for preventing institutional racism and for identifying new options to remedy long-standing inequities. Equity assessments can also be used to reduce, eliminate and prevent racial discrimination and inequities. When equity is not consciously addressed, inequality is often unconsciously replicated.

However, DGS echoes the concerns of the Planning Department. The bill, as currently written, sets an aggressive timetable and puts a heavy burden on the Planning Department and Planning Commission. The timetable would not allow the department to conduct training and develop an action plan which is necessary to create meaningful assessments. Additionally, the department would require guidance on equity assessments. Finally, developing and implementing equity assessments should be a rigorous process, which would require significant resources and staffing to develop and administer properly, which is not currently reflected in the bill as drafted.

DGS is committed to proactively develop policies, practices, and strategic investments to reverse disparity trends based on race, gender and income, acting to eliminate structural and institutional racism and discrimination, developing and implementing an equity action plan embedding principles and strategies into City operations, programs and services, and conducting an equity assessment of existing and proposed City actions and policies.

The Department of General Services **supports with amendments** City Council Bill 18-0223 after thorough consideration. Performing equity assessments will be a vital tool for preventing institutional bias and for identifying new options to remedy long-standing inequities.