

CITY OF BALTIMORE

CATHERINE E. PUGH, Mayor



OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND
WAGE ENFORCEMENT
BALTIMORE CITY WAGE COMMISSION

JILL P. CARTER, Director
7 E. Redwood Street, 9th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

June 13, 2018

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 N. Holiday Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Re: City Council Bill 18-0223- Equity Assessment Program

Dear Mr. President and Council Members,

On behalf of the Baltimore City Office of Civil Rights and Wage Enforcement (OCRWE), and Acting Director Thomas, we appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on the above reference bill. As an agency whose mission is rooted in equity, in law enforcement, employment, disability access, and wage compliance, we are in strong support of this bill.

The Wage Commission enforces Prevailing and Living Wage Laws on contracts awarded by the City of Baltimore. Enforcement includes reviewing and investigating certified payrolls for discrepancies in overtime and misclassification. In addition to the review of certified payrolls, the Wage Commission also investigates complaints from individuals who allege that they have been paid improper wages.

Currently, the Wage Commission is responsible for monitoring more than a billion dollars in Living and Prevailing Wage contracts. The majority of constituents we service are affected by inequitable incomes. These employees usually represent the Latinx and African American communities, returning citizens, and economically disadvantaged workers. Once the Wage Commission is equipped with a Wage Compliance Tracking System, then a proper equity assessment for the aforementioned bill is attainable. A compliance tracking system provides the platform to produce a variety of queries that yield ongoing data streams where immediate information can be gathered for purposes of cost recovery and enforcement. Once in place, the tracking system would facilitate reporting that can analyze equity based on the following: zip code, national origin, race, gender, class, labor classification, and or ex-offender status.

Resources needed:

In order for the Wage Commission to maximize data collection, and provide valuable real time data streaming to the Equity Assessment Program, the Wage Commission's enforcement and capability would necessitate the implementation of the Wage Compliance Tracking system.

Sincerely,

Sharita Thomas
Acting Director