



News Release

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CONTACT: [Kelly Cambrel](#)
Public Affairs Specialist, 301-600-2590

Legislation Creates Equity and Inclusion Office *Proposal Also Requires Formation of Citizens Commission*

FREDERICK, Md. – Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner today unveiled legislation to help identify and address issues of inequity within Frederick County Government. The bill establishes by law an Office of Equity and Inclusion, including the position of Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer. It also creates an Equity and Inclusion Commission to serve as an advisory commission to the County Executive, County Council and the Office of Equity and Inclusion. The creation of both the office and the commission was recommended by the Equity and Inclusion Leadership Team, which issued its final report last month.

“My vision for Frederick County Government is fairness and opportunity for all, so everyone can share in our community’s prosperity and fully participate in civic life,” Executive Gardner said. “County government can lead the way by providing equitable programs, policies, resources and services, and by embracing diversity and inclusion in all we do. We are better together.”

Frederick County Council Member Kai Hagen worked collaboratively with Executive Gardner and Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer Michael Hughes on the legislation. He has agreed to sponsor the bill when it is introduced to the County Council.

Under the leadership of the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer, the Office of Equity and Inclusion will develop and manage a strategic framework to ensure equitable opportunities are available within all levels of County government and for all County residents. They will ensure equity informs planning, policy development, recruitment and hiring, and decision-making.

The Equity and Inclusion Commission, comprised of 13 members, will advise the County Executive, County Council and the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer. Members will represent a wide range of ethnicities, professional backgrounds, and socioeconomic status. Each member must be a resident of Frederick County and a registered voter. They will help to plan community outreach, initiatives, and events that affirm, celebrate, and advance diversity, equity and inclusion throughout Frederick County. They will also provide input on the strategic plan developed by the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

A copy of the proposed legislation can be found online at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Equity.

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