

State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights



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March 4, 2015

Testimony Regarding: MCCR Budget Hearing Position: Concur with Governor's Allowance

To the Members of the Senate Budget & Taxation and House Appropriations committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Department of Legislative Services Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Analysis. We would like to thank our assigned analyst, Ms. Elizabeth Bayly, for her thorough analysis. While the current budget realities and resulting spending plan presents challenges, we believe it is responsible.

The recommended spending plan will preserve the opportunity for MCCR to meet its production standards because no currently filled staff reductions will occur. In fact, it is anticipated that productivity will increase as a result of targeted staff training coupled with the gained experience of recent Civil Rights Officer (investigator) hires. In addition, newly instituted processing efficiencies are expected to yield positive results on the number of days to complete case closures. Over the past three years, Intake has shown an upward trend and that is expected to continue as the efforts of the recently reconstituted Education & Outreach Unit is now paying dividends.

However, please note that any reduction in full staffing levels will have a debilitating impact on the service delivery of the agency. The current staffing levels at full productivity enables the agency to meet its federal contracts and obligations. Even a singular reduction would threaten this balance and jeopardize the agency's sustainability in maintaining its relationship with our federal partners.

In closing, MCCR respectfully requests the Subcommittee's and Committee's support in concurring with the Governor's allowance for MCCR in his FY2016 budget.

Background: The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (formerly the Maryland Commission on Human Relations) is the State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state contracts based upon race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and physical and mental disability.

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