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**Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Fiscal Year 2027
Operating Budget
Response to Department of Legislative Services Budget Analysis**

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Health & Human Services Subcommittee
Senator Cory V. McCray, Chair
January 30, 2026

House Appropriations Committee
Health & Social Services Subcommittee
Delegate Emily K. Shetty, Chair
February 4, 2026

To the Members of the House Health & Social Services Subcommittee and the Senate Health & Human Services Subcommittee:

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Department of Legislative Services Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Analysis. We want to thank our assigned analyst, Mr. Connor Brown, for his thorough analysis. The recommended spending plan enables MCCR to meet our production obligations with our federal partners, while supporting MCCR's continued efforts to reduce the number of backlogged complaints pending assignment to an investigator.

As you may recall from last year, record numbers of inquiries continue to have a direct and substantial impact on MCCR's case processing metrics. For comparison, MCCR received:

- In FY2023, 1,900 inquiries that resulted in 661 authorized charges.
- In FY2024, 1,761 inquiries that resulted in 676 authorized charges.
- In FY2025, 1,962 inquiries that resulted in 825 authorized charges.

As of January 26, 2026, MCCR's backlog of complaints awaiting investigation remains at 539 complaints. While consistent with the backlog reported last year, this is still lower than the high of 600 backlogged complaints seen since FY2020.

"Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination."

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To address this backlog, the FY2026 budget allotted MCCR an additional 12 PINs, increasing MCCR's total number of positions from 39 in FY2025 to 53 in FY2026.¹ The FY2027 Governor's Allowance continues this level of mission critical support by including funding for 52 positions. Only one position (PIN 522408 Administrative Specialist II) is slated for abolishment within the Governor's Allowance.² MCCR expects the number of both inquiries and complaints to continue increasing as our constituents look to the State of Maryland for protection from unlawful acts of discrimination, hate, and bias. Without the PINs in the FY2027 Governor's Allowance, MCCR forecasts the backlog to grow to as high as 800 complaints.

Since the beginning of FY2026, MCCR has been aggressively recruiting and filling vacancies at the earliest possible opportunity. MCCR is grateful for the Department of Budget & Management's support amid their need to identify opportunities to close the projected budget deficit. As requested on page 4 of the analysis, MCCR's personnel updates as of January 26, 2026, are as follows:

- **PIN 002669 (Office Secretary):** Vacant as of January 21, 2026, following the incumbent's promotion to Civil Rights Officer I. MCCR anticipates posting the recruitment in February 2026 and hiring by March/April 2026.
- **PIN 052836 (Civil Rights Advanced Lead):** Vacant as of December 10, 2025, following the incumbent's promotion to Civil Rights Officer Supervisor. Recruitment is underway with an application deadline of February 6, 2026. MCCR anticipates hiring by March/April 2026.
- **PIN 057339 (Civil Rights Advanced Lead):** Vacant as of January 1, 2026, due to retirement. Recruitment is underway with an application deadline of February 6, 2026. MCCR anticipates hiring by March/April 2026.
- **PIN 424044 (Civil Rights Officer I - Contractual):** Vacant as of January 7, 2026, after the incumbent transitioned to a permanent position. MCCR anticipates posting for recruitment in February 2026 and hiring by March/April 2026.
- **PIN 424046 (Civil Rights Officer I - Contractual):** Offer accepted. The new hire begins on January 28, 2026.
- **PIN 522391 (Assistant General Counsel I):** Offer accepted. The new hire begins on February 4, 2026.
- **PIN 522392 (Assistant General Counsel I):** This position will remain vacant through FY2026 to satisfy Statewide Section 38 personnel reduction.
- **PIN 522408 (Administrative Specialist II):** This position will remain vacant through FY2026 to satisfy Statewide Section 38 personnel reduction.

In addition to filling these positions, MCCR continues to make internal changes that will not only address the immediate backlog, but also enable the Commission to resolve complaints at the administrative level more efficiently. One of these changes has been the relaunch of our Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") unit, which now has a dedicated supervisor and staff. To date, MCCR has successfully resolved more than 34 complaints (with a total monetary benefit amount of \$460,430.00) in mediation that would otherwise remain pending in the backlog.

¹ For comparison, in FY1989 MCCR had approximately 100 staff members.

² The abolition of this position will not have an impact on case production, including addressing the backlog.

Reducing and eliminating the backlog remains MCCR's top priority in FY2027. The Commissioners and staff at the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights know that the timely investigation of these complaints is vital to identifying and eliminating unlawful discrimination in Maryland while securing meaningful relief for victims deserving to be made whole. MCCR is fortunate to have among its ranks incredibly passionate staff committed to both the mission and vision of our agency. MCCR would not be in as strong a position today without their professionalism and dedication.

In closing, we thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony, as well as for your support of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights over the years. MCCR respectfully requests the committee's support of the Governor's FY2027 Allowance. MCCR also notes and will submit to the committees its report on measures implemented to reduce case backlogs by November 1, 2026.