

MEMORANDUM

May 1, 2015

TO: County Council

FROM: Josh Hamlin, Legislative Attorney 

SUBJECT: **Introduction:** Bill 22-15, Housing Policy – Policy Implementation – Income-Restricted Housing Website

Bill 22-15, Housing Policy – Policy Implementation – Income-Restricted Housing Website, sponsored by Lead Sponsor Councilmember Berliner and Co-Sponsors Councilmembers Navarro and Hucker is scheduled to be introduced on May 5, 2015. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for June 9 at 1:30 p.m.

Bill 22-15 would require the Executive to compile and maintain a searchable list of income-restricted housing in the County on the appropriate website. Councilmember Berliner explained the purpose of this Bill in his April 28 memorandum to Councilmembers (See ©5).

This packet contains:	<u>Circle #</u>
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Bill No. 22-15
Concerning: Housing Policy – Policy
Implementation – Income-Restricted
Housing Website
Revised: February 12, 2015 Draft No. 1
Introduced: May 5, 2015
Expires: November 5, 2016
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: None
Ch. _____, Laws of Mont. Co. _____

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Berliner
Co-Sponsors: Councilmembers Navarro and Hucker

AN ACT to:

- (1) require the Executive to compile and maintain a searchable list of income-restricted housing in the County on the appropriate website; and
- (2) generally amend the law governing the County Housing Policy.

By amending

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 25B, Housing Policy
Sections 25B-2 and 25B-3

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

1 **Sec. 1. Sections 25B-2 and 25B-3 are amended as follows:**

2 **Sec. 25B-2. Definitions.**

3 [(a)] *Affordable housing:* Any dwelling unit or other form of housing
4 constructed for sale or rent at a price equal to or less than that provided in
5 Chapter 25A, and any assisted elderly housing.

6 [(b)] *Agency:* The Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the
7 Housing Opportunities Commission, or any other governmental entity
8 which receives any part of its funding or other resources from or through
9 the County government.

10 [(c)] *Assisted-family housing:* Those units of affordable housing which consist
11 of privately or governmentally owned rental units for which the owners
12 receive subsidies from the federal, state or local government in the form
13 of rent supplements or mortgage interest subsidies, except

14 (1) units designated for occupancy by persons 62 years old or older;
15 and

16 (2) units which benefit from tax-exempt financing but receive no other
17 government subsidy.

18 *Income-restricted housing:* Any dwelling unit or other form of housing
19 where, in order to qualify to rent or purchase, a person must meet
20 certain income eligibility guidelines as set by a government agency or
21 program.

22 [(d)] *Person:* Any individual, partnership, corporation, joint stock association,
23 or any city or state or any subdivision thereof; and any trustee, receiver,
24 assignee or personal representative thereof.

25 [(e)] *Scattered site unit:* A single-family detached or attached dwelling
26 acquired by an agency for assisted-family rental housing, but which is not
27 in a subdivision or development that is primarily assisted-family housing.

28 **25B-3. Housing policy implementation.**

29 The following measures are intended to implement, in part, the housing policy
30 of Montgomery County as that policy is amended from time to time, and to increase
31 the number and proportion of affordable, including assisted-family, housing in the total
32 housing supply of the County in order to provide a full range of housing choices,
33 conveniently located throughout the County.

34 (a) The County Executive must:

35 * * *

36 (14) Report on the distribution of affordable housing units throughout
37 the County and the programs and activities that the County has
38 engaged in to enhance the stock of affordable housing; [and]

39 (15) Compile and maintain a searchable list of all available income-
40 restricted housing in the County on the appropriate website; and

41 (16) Explore the potential for private developers of employment centers
42 and employers to play a more active role in producing affordable
43 housing.

44 * * *

45 *Approved:*

46 _____
George Leventhal, President, County Council Date

47 *Approved:*

48 _____
Isiah Leggett, County Executive Date

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill 22-15

Housing Policy – Policy Implementation – Income-Restricted Housing Website

DESCRIPTION: Bill 22-15 would require the Executive to compile and maintain a searchable list of income-restricted housing in the County on the appropriate website.

PROBLEM: People seeking affordable housing in the County face a fragmented search process, and information currently available to them from the County is sometimes inaccurate or out of date.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: Assist in streamlining the search process for residents in need of affordable housing.

COORDINATION: Department of Housing and Community Affairs

FISCAL IMPACT: To be requested.

ECONOMIC IMPACT: To be requested.

EVALUATION: To be requested.

EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE: To be researched.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION: Josh Hamlin, Legislative Attorney, 240-777-7892

APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES: n/a

PENALTIES: n/a



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ROGER BERLINER
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 1

CHAIRMAN
TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

April 28, 2015

TO: Council Colleagues

FROM: Councilmember Roger Berliner

Re: Legislation to Create "One-Stop" Affordable Housing Website

Montgomery County has long been a national leader on the issue of affordable housing. And this is something that we and past Councils can take great pride in. Just a few days ago, our HHS and PHED Committees unanimously recommended approval for funding our county's Housing Initiative Fund by \$368,090 more than what we appropriated in last year's budget. Those dollars will go a long way to worthwhile projects and initiatives aimed to help those who need housing assistance.

However, despite that joint committee recommendation, we all know much more work remains to be done to expand and preserve our county's stock of affordable housing. And we can all also appreciate during this budget season, resources for more affordable housing – or a multitude of other worthy issues – are scarce. Because of that, I believe we should look at ways we can move the needle on this issue that would not cost us large sums of money. One such way I believe we can achieve that would be to assist in streamlining the search process for residents in need of affordable housing.

The attached legislation I am proposing would create a "one-stop" website that would list all of the income-restricted units in the county, both for rent and for purchase. The website would serve as a clearinghouse for those looking for affordable housing by providing information regarding eligibility requirements, as well as unit listings, locations, and contact information.

With long wait lists and information on affordable housing currently scattered over various websites, I feel that the least we could do for individuals and families looking for affordable housing – many who work several jobs and have families to care for and/or maybe new to the county and unfamiliar with all of its various affordable housing programs – is to simplify the search process in a consumer friendly way. Indeed, when I personally went on the DHCA's website for affordable rental units, the information listed was often years out of date. I shared both the legislation and my thoughts about needing a better website with our Director of DHCA, who readily agreed that it could and should be much better.

I respectfully ask for your support for this measure. Please let me know if you would like to be listed as a cosponsor of this legislation and, of course, if you have any questions. I will be introducing this legislation at Council session next Tuesday, May 5.