



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Hank Greenberg,
Maryland State AARP Director
200 St. Paul Place, Suite 2510
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. Greenberg:

On the behalf of Howard County, it is with great pleasure I write to express interest in joining the World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Under my administration, Howard County is committed to advancing policies and programs that provide high quality of life, purposeful opportunities for community and civic engagement, and creation of an age-friendly community.

The Howard County population of older adults has increased dramatically in the past two decades, and in the coming years the county's older adult population is projected to continue to increase, with the number of people age 60+ forecasted to grow from 71,947 in 2020, up to 105,496 in 2045 (47% increase). In 2015, to address this exponential growth, Howard County embarked on a year-long effort that engaged more than 1600 community members from the public, private and non-profit sectors to develop the report, *Planning for the Growth of the Older Adult Population in Howard County: Creating an Age Friendly Community*. Six priority areas were identified to include: advocacy and establishing a safety net for vulnerable adults; promote physical, emotional and financial well-being of caregivers; ensure diverse and affordable housing options; provide affordable, accessible, and varied transportation options; optimize opportunities for a healthy quality of life; and prepare residents for the implications of the "new demographic reality" at both the personal and community level. Preparing Howard County residents for the longevity revolution and its implications is a critical component of making Howard County a desirable place to age.

My vision is to create an age-friendly Howard County where older adults age in our communities with the resources and supports that they need to grow, thrive and live with dignity. Howard County has a robust aging services network to include six 50+ Centers, a Loan Closet, a coordinated system of information, referral, and assistance, and multiple programs and resources that focus on healthy aging, managing chronic disease, and promoting emotional and spiritual wellbeing. Next steps to address the priority areas and to realize the Age-Friendly designation include our Office on Aging and Independence establishing an Age-Friendly Coordinator role to provide integrated, cross-county coordination and collaboration around age-friendly initiatives

and our Commission on Aging convening a statewide summit on Age-Friendly communities to learn and share best practices.

We look forward to working together with AARP and other community partners to join the World Health Organization and AARP's network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive