



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 3, 2014

For more information, contact:

Cindy Mumby

Phone: 410-340-5376

camumby@harfordcountymd.gov

Harford County Executive Barry Glassman Acts to Streamline Government, Proposes Employee Retirement Incentive

BEL AIR, Md., (Dec. 3, 2014) - Harford County Executive Barry Glassman took actions Tuesday to streamline county government for improved customer service, and to save money by proposing a retirement incentive for eligible county employees.

Regarding his planned reorganization of the executive branch, Mr. Glassman said, "I would like to thank our county employees and the approximately 70 volunteers on my transition teams who recommended structural improvements to better serve our customers, the citizens of Harford County."

Issuing a series of executive orders, Mr. Glassman plans to:

- Abolish the Office of Chief of Staff, clarifying lines of authority within the executive branch.
- Privatize the essential functions of the Tourism and Marketing Division in the Office of Economic Development by shifting them to Visit Harford! The non-profit Visit Harford! promotes economic development and tourism in the county.
- Promote employment by transferring the Harford Transit Division from the Department of Community Services to the Department of Economic Development. Harford Transit provides transportation to the transit-dependent population. While maintaining the division's essential social service function, this shift will sharpen its focus on employers and their employees.

Speaking of the shift, Glassman said, “The availability of reliable transportation is essential to promoting jobs and job growth. Through its relationships with current and potential employers, the Office of Economic Development is positioned to leverage Harford Transit’s existing services as an engine of economic growth.”

- Improve government accountability by establishing the Division of Citizens Affairs and Administrative Services under the Director of Administration. This division will provide citizens with a point of contact for getting questions answered and concerns resolved. The division will also be a resource for County Council members serving constituents. The division chief will act as the liaison between the county executive and the community councils.

“Good customer service for our citizens begins with direct access to government representatives dedicated to the purpose, equipped with accurate information and empowered to solve problems in concert with one or more departments of county government,” Glassman said.

- Advocate for Harford County by reviving the Office of Governmental and Community Relations.

“In economic development, with special emphasis on education, agriculture and technology, I hope to make Harford County a leader among the big seven Maryland counties. Furthering this goal, the Office of Governmental and Community Relations will actively promote the county’s interests on behalf of our citizens with agencies, regulators and legislators at the local, state and national level,” Glassman said.

- Improve efficacy by transferring the Risk Management Division to the Department of Law. The exception to this transfer is security, which will remain under the Director of Administration. “Because the Law Department is involved in issues of liability, workers’ compensation and the aftermath of accidents, it can more effectively manage the county’s risk prevention and risk management operations,” Glassman said.
- Emphasize cost savings by transferring the Sustainability Office currently under the Director of Administration to the Department of Procurement as part of a newly created Division of Efficiency and Innovation. “Making sure Harford taxpayers get the best bang for their buck, this change reflects my philosophy of continuously identifying efficiencies throughout county government. It also leverages the skills of my Procurement Department director nominee who has demonstrated the ability to find cost savings in large organizations,” Glassman said.

In accordance with the county charter, the above executive orders become effective in 60 days unless the County Council chooses to take earlier action. Previously announced Cabinet nominees

were also presented to the council Tuesday; they are automatically approved in 30 days unless the council takes earlier action.

In addition, at County Executive Glassman's request, legislation was introduced to the council Tuesday to fund a one-time retirement incentive for eligible county employees in the fiscal year 2015. The incentive applies only to employees paid in the classified services before December 1, 2014. The necessary funding is proposed to come from the county's unappropriated fund balance.

"With gratitude for the service of all our valued employees, I am proposing this retirement incentive because ongoing fiscal pressures will require a reduction in the county workforce. My hope is that, despite these pressures, a portion of the savings can later be reinvested to help county employees get back on their pay scale," Glassman said.

Regarding his overall actions on the first full day of his administration, County Executive Glassman said, "I look forward to working with the county council on these and future measures fulfilling my pledge to make county government more efficient and customer service driven."

###