



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 15, 2024

Dear Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention,

We are shocked and dismayed at this recent news article revealing that the Montgomery County Library systems, Friends of the Library, have implemented and continue to defend gender and race-based pricing for vendor booths at their MoComCon event.

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2024/jan/11/montgomery-county-libraries-seek-inclusiveness-wit/>

As staunch advocates for equal rights and opportunity, we are deeply appalled by the decision. Not only is this illegal, it is also unconstitutional and clearly a violation of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. This policy is offensive, deeply flawed, and clearly violates America's founding principles and the great state of Maryland.

Race-based pricing is no different than the 'Poll Tax,' which ended in 1964. It was the 24th Amendment that outlawed the Poll Tax. Yet, Montgomery County's Library system has effectively reinstated Jim Crow in 2024. Not only is this illegal and offensive, but it clearly violates the founding principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Maryland Declaration of Rights.

The idea that a library system would endorse a pricing policy that discriminates against Marylanders based on race or gender is counter to the purpose of the library system: To promote critical thinking skills. The policy is dehumanizing at its very core—shame on you, Montgomery County Library systems.

*"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." Martin Luther King, Jr. (Aug 28, 1963)*


It's time for the library system to lead by example and demonstrate the content of their character. We urge you to condemn this policy and request that the Montgomery County Library System formally apologize for the harm it has caused. Our collective responsibility is to foster an

environment of inclusivity and respect where everyone is treated fairly and equitably, regardless of their ethnic background or gender.


The idea that to be inclusive to some, we must harm others is incredibly wrong-headed and dangerous. We can promote diversity and inclusion for all people without resorting to the exact forms of discriminatory practices that existed in the past. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Matt Morgan  
Delegate

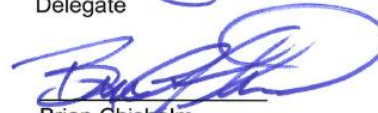
  
Robin Grammar  
Delegate

  
Mark Fisher  
Delegate

  
Ryan Nawrocki  
Delegate

  
Lauren Arian  
Delegate

  
Kathy Szeliga  
Delegate

  
Brian Chisholm  
Delegate

See attached Exhibit 1 - Montgomery County Libraries seek inclusiveness with race-based pricing\_ 'Clearly discriminatory' - Washington Times.pdf