



PRESS RELEASE
August 23, 2022

Contact: Melissa Wojnaroski
(202) 618-4158
mwojnaroski@usccr.gov

Maryland Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Releases Report: *Water Affordability in Maryland*

The Maryland Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released [a report](#) to the Commission following a series of public meetings and collection of public testimony on water affordability in the state. In this study, the Committee sought to evaluate water access and affordability, with a particular emphasis on shut-offs and poor infrastructure maintenance concentrated in low-income communities and communities of color.

The report addresses a wide range of concerns including:

- the lack of state or national standards to guarantee affordable access to water, despite being recognized in 2010 by the U.N. General Assembly as a fundamental human right, essential to life;
- the inconsistent availability of assistance programs throughout the state;
- the near-exclusive focus on owner-occupants in allocating water discounts;
- the ongoing impact of historic racial segregation in housing on failing infrastructure in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color;
- the lack of available data on shut-offs, liens, and payment plans. The report concludes with a series of recommendations regarding actions that can be taken address the identified civil rights concerns.

Committee Chair Kendra Brown said, “Water is critical to our health and wellbeing. Thus, access to affordable water is a necessity for Marylanders. The report sheds light on what can be done to bridge the gap between communities and affordable water access as well as recommendations to address needed infrastructure updates.”

The Committee will host a live press-briefing to discuss the report at 10 a.m. Wednesday, August 23, 2022, at the House Office Building located at 6 Bladen St. in Annapolis. The press conference is outside between the flags in front of the Taylor Entrance. Please contact mwojnaroski@usccr.gov for further information.

###

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).