



CITY OF ATLANTA

BOARD OF ETHICS

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August 22, 2017

The Honorable Ceasar Mitchell
City Council President
City of Atlanta
55 Trinity Avenue, SW
2nd Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Subject: Proposed Ordinance to amend the appointment process for members of the Board of Ethics

Dear City Council President Mitchell:

The Ethics Board appreciates City Council's support over the past several years that has resulted in a strong culture of ethics in the City of Atlanta. The proposed legislation to amend the appointment process for members of the Board of Ethics raises several concerns and seeks to erode the independence of the Board.

In light of the current climate and pending appeal of the recent DeKalb court ruling to the Georgia Supreme Court, and review of best practices for Ethics boards and commissions, the Board recommends that Council appoint an outside Commission consisting of five persons to thoroughly review the proposed legislation and provide a recommendation with thoughtful consideration for the future. The Commission will be independent and transparent and may include former Mayor Shirley Franklin, Emmet Bondurant and former members of the Ethics Board.

Protecting the integrity of the government, promoting the public trust, and instilling a culture of ethics in city government are critical functions that require a level of independence. The appointment of a Commission would demonstrate the City's commitment to transparency and good ethics, notwithstanding current investigations or other activities of the Ethics Board and Office.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Kate Wasch, Chair

cc: Members of City Council
Members of the Board of Ethics