



HOPE HALLECK  
CLERK TO THE  
COUNTY BOARD

## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA OFFICE OF THE COUNTY BOARD

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### MEMBERS

JAY FISETTE  
CHAIR  
KATIE CRISTOL  
VICE CHAIR

CHRISTIAN DORSEY  
LIBBY GARVEY  
JOHN VIHSTADT

January 17, 2017

Dear Arlington Residents,

On behalf of the Board, and in response to questions and concerns that we have heard from the community, we want to reaffirm our commitment that Arlington County will remain inclusive and welcoming.

Arlington has long been a community that strives to embrace and equitably serve our diverse population that includes people from all walks of life. We prohibit discrimination based on race, color, gender status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religious observance, physical or mental ability and any other characteristic subject to marginalization. Our vision, which asserts that each of us is important, means that ours is a community where diversity is not simply tolerated, but appreciated and respected.

We are an inclusive community that welcomes immigrant populations, regardless of legal status. We also made it clear in our [statements on the 2016 Presidential Election](#) delivered at our Recessed Board Meeting in November 2016, and in the resolution that we adopted in 2007, a [Resolution Supporting Arlington's Newcomers](#).

It is long-standing policy that Arlington County law enforcement has not and will not monitor, detain, interview, or investigate a person solely for the purpose of determining their immigration status. Action by our law enforcement officers is based upon reasonable suspicion or probable cause of criminal activity, and we have a strong policy against racial profiling which prohibits our deputies and officers from taking action based on that individual's race, ethnicity or national origin. Importantly, a person's right to file a police report, participate in police-community activities, or otherwise benefit from police services is not contingent upon citizenship or immigration status.

As you probably know, Federal law governs immigration issues entirely, and federal law enforcement authorities have exclusive authority to enforce those laws. Arlington County assumes or asserts no role in law enforcement.

It is the Board's pledge that Arlington will remain an inclusive, welcoming community where everyone is valued and respected and has the opportunity to live out their dreams, regardless of their legal status. We believe that in our debates we must remember we are speaking of human beings - our neighbors, our colleagues, our classmates - who are simply seeking the same safety, security, freedom and opportunity that we are all so privileged to enjoy. I hope this information is helpful to you and that you will share it with anyone who has concerns about our community.

On behalf of the County Board, we look forward to working together with the community for a safe, positive and productive 2017.

Sincerely,

Jay Fissette  
Chair, Arlington County Board