



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Brittany Vendryes, Esq. <i>BV</i> Executive Director Environmental Control Board
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	February 7, 2025
SUBJECT	Council Bill 25-0001 Department of Consumer Protection and Business Licensing

Position: Without recommendation

BILL SYNOPSIS

This bill establishes a Department of Consumer Protection and Business Licensing, as well as a Board of Consumer Protection and Business Licensing. The Department will centralize administration of city business licenses, permits, and practices and enforce the business licensing and consumer protection provisions of the City Code. The Board, acting as part of the Department, will adjudicate all hearings of the Department and review and propose improvements to the rules and regulations governing business licensing and consumer protection.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Environmental Control Board (ECB) is an independent administrative hearing board that adjudicates contested environmental citations. Environmental citations are issued by various City agencies for violations listed under Article 1, § 40-14 of the City Code.

The bill's Article 1, § 42-9 lists the Baltimore Code sections that the Department of Consumer Protection and Business Licensing can enforce. As part of their enforcement, Article 1, § 42-29 (A)(3) of the bill grants the Director of Consumer Protection and Business Licensing the power to issue environmental citations for violations related to commercial parking facilities (Article 15, §12), Special Event Parking Lots (Article 15, §13), and Street Vendors (Article 15, §17). According to Article 1, §40-14, citations issued in these three subtitles of the Licensing and Regulation Article are to be adjudicated by the ECB. This could have an impact on volume for the ECB if the new Department chooses to issue a significant number of environmental citations in these areas. At this point, there is no way to predict how often the Director would choose to issue environmental citations; however, our experience is that the addition of new citable

offenses rarely causes a significant increase in hearing requests for the ECB.

ECB has no objections to the bill, but as it has some potential to have an impact on our agency's case volume, we respectfully take the position of **Without Recommendation**.

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill is unlikely to have any financial impact on the ECB.

AMENDMENTS

None.