



January 26, 2021

To the Honorable City Council President Nick Mosby  
And Members of the Baltimore City Council  
City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, Room 409

### **Summary of the Bill**

Council Bill #21-0017 Study and Report - City Employee Parking Benefits requires that the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Finance submit a report to the Mayor and City Council evaluating certain matters related to providing parking and commuter benefits to City employees and providing for a special effective date. The bill proposes that a report be completed no later than six (6) months from the enactment of the bill. It will include recommendations concerning parking eligibility, best practices, cost-benefit analysis of providing certain agency officials with parking and commuter benefits, and research into potential partnerships with the Maryland Transit Administration in order to provide each agency officer and employee with a commuter benefit for use on certain Maryland Transit Administration facilities, such as CityLink, LocalLink, Light RailLink, etc.

### **DHR's Recommendation**

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) reviewed the above-captioned bill. For the reasons stated below, DHR **does not oppose** this legislation.

### **Comments and Analysis**

By way of background, from 2008 to 2012, the City offered a pre-tax program for commuter benefits that applied to public transit only. It was a priority program under the O'Malley administration that was managed by Wage Works and was strictly employee deduction based, similar to a Flexible Spending Account program. That program was not widely utilized; it never reached more than 100 enrollees. It was ultimately not renewed. As it relates to current practice, the City offers a standard subsidy for all City employees by way of a lower rate, which has been agreed upon with the Baltimore City Parking Authority. In addition, each agency currently determines who it grants access to a full parking subsidy, and each agency sets their own process.

DHR believes that a study is the appropriate first step for assessing the City's parking and commuter benefits offerings. We recognize that the feasibility of large scale changes to any such program will be significantly impacted by the global COVID-19 public health crisis. This is in terms of the City's economic recovery, continued fiscal constraints, and the wisdom of prioritizing

a shift to public transit in light of the ongoing public health concerns. DHR recommends an amendment that would require coordination with the Parking Authority of Baltimore City in light of annual reports on transit issues conducted by that agency. To that end, we support the amendment presented by the Department of Finance. For all of these reasons outlined herein, we support the will of the committee on City Council Bill 21-0017.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Quinton M. Herbert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Quinton M. Herbert, JD  
Director and Chief Human Capital Officer