



HEARING NOTES

Bill: 25-0126

Accessibility in City Programs, Services, and Activities

Committee: Public Health and Environment
Chaired by: Chairwoman Phylicia Porter

Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 8, 2026

Time (Beginning): 10:05 AM

Time (Ending): 11:20 AM

Location: Council Chambers

Total Attendance: Approximately 50 In-Person
 Approximately 05 Virtually

Committee Members in Attendance:

Phylicia Porter James Torrence
 Mark Parker Ryan Dorsey
 Mark Conway Odette Ramos

Bill Synopsis in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Agency reports read.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Video or audio-digitally recorded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?.....	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Motioned by:	Councilmember Ramos		

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- **Public Testimony**
 - Jacob Leffler – President, Baltimore City Association of the Deaf - Online Testimony
 - Alex McLin – Baltimore City Association of the Deaf
 - Deanna Tilden, Baltimore City Association of the Deaf

- Barbara Dent, League of Women Voters of Baltimore City
 - Gabriel Rubinstein, Attorney, Disability Rights Maryland
 - Crystal Simmons, Student, Coppin State University
 - **Agency Representatives**
 - Lisa Kelly, Office of Equity and Civil Rights
 - Zachary Wellman, Office of Equity and Civil Rights
 - Gabriel Stuart-Sikowitz, Department of Finance
 - Desiree Luckey, Law Department
 - Isaiah Griffith, Mayor's Office
 - Catalina Rodriguez, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
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Major Issues Discussed

1. Councilwoman Ramos, primary sponsor of the legislation gave opening remarks. The bill codifies the American Disability Act Law into City law, she stated. She talked about the proposed amendments she submitted and informed the attendees/listening audience that part of bill needed to be implemented by April 25th per federal law.
2. Chairwoman Porter commended Councilwoman Ramos for her work on the legislation. However, she stated that she was not happy about not meeting the April 25th deadline and talked about the importance of being in-line with federal mandates.
3. Six (6) people gave public testimony. An on-line interpreter was available to interpret the sign language for three (3) of the people who testified. Some highlighted comments and/or topics were:
 - We need more access to community services, resources and activities
 - Thanked Councilwoman Ramos for all the work she did with the legislation
 - For our community, equal access is not typically given but is a civil right!
 - I strongly support the bill because:
 - It is valuable to our community
 - Many people who look for services can't find them or there is no access for same
 - It requires just simple coordination and/or tasks to reduce communication barriers!
 - Accessibility is often an afterthought!
 - Oftentimes interpreters are not provided when needed!
 - Often residents feel they are isolated from decisions that impact them!
 - This bill allows for the opportunity to change these patterns! To have clearer responsibilities and accountability within our community
 - I feel this bill will make lasting changes
 - This bill will send a clear message that the City values all of its residents!
 - A speaker shared an experience he encountered when proper access to resources was not available when needed.
 - One speaker on behalf of the Women Voters of Baltimore said:
 - We strongly support and are advocates of the ADA
 - We applaud the Council's commitment to ADA and "for tighten things up"
 - Advancing equity and inclusion can only strengthen our community and the City as a whole!

- In addition to speaking, Ms. B. Dent submitted written testimony. **A copy is in the bill file**
 - Some remarks made by the Attorney on behalf of Disability Rights Maryland were:
 - Our organization is charged with protecting rights of those with disabilities
 - The bill is an important move to ensure the City meets its obligation to comply with the ADA.
 - The bill will strengthen local accountability
 - The bill will make a difference for residents with disabilities
 - Some remarks by the student from Coppin State University were:
 - After listening to the testimony today, I strongly support this bill
 - It is not often I hear conversations regarding people with disabilities and, as a “social media intern” I plan to take information back to the University to share.
4. The committee members went over the agency reports with the representatives for same. Per the representative from the Department of Finance, the bill will have a fiscal impact to allow for additional staffing. Per the representative of the Office of Equity and Civil Rights there will be \$60,000 set-aside for close caption costs.
5. Committee members asked questions, stated concerns, and made comments. Some highlighted topics of discussion and/or concern were:
- * Some discussion regarding the timeline(s) for when legislation will be enacted
 - * A question regarding why the bill was not referred to BCIT, Baltimore City Information Technology/Charm TV and what BCIT role will be regarding implementing the legislation. Talk about this – referring to the “Digital Access Policy”

Requested by Chairwoman Porter and Ramos: Digital Access Policy and any type of 508 Compliance - BCIT/Charm TV are to prepare and share with the committee information pertaining to coming into compliance with the Digital Access Policy to include any type of 508 compliance.

Requested by Member Ramos – to Law Department – Regarding protocols being in place for deadlines and/or timelines for enacting legislation. In the future inform the council members as soon as possible when legislation includes deadlines and/or timelines for enacting same.

*Chairwoman Porter explained what “508 compliance” means.

*Member Torrence asked why the bill was not referred to the Department of Human Resources. He also stated a follow-up meeting is needed to fine tune the legislation because all agencies don’t have the same policies. Per member Ramos, there is a reference to employment in the bill but still need a lot of work on the agencies’ plan that will be done within the next year. And, if possible, have follow-up committee hearings throughout the year to receive updates.

*Some discussion regarding information that can/can’t be shared.

*Finance Report – Fiscal Note – questions and comments regarding same.

*What strategies do agencies have for getting more resources for the implementation of the legislation?

*Per member Conway (a suggestion), that City/agencies look at getting more resources to help implement legislation

*How does the legislation affect the role of the City Council?

*Training – ADA Coordinators – what will this look like?

*Reasonable Accommodation – How are these requests handled? What is the process?

*Language Access Plan within Agencies – What is the status for same? What will be the process?

Requested by Member Torrence – ADA Coordinators for Agencies – Provide a list of all the ADA Coordinators for Agencies; to include the City Council within the next week.

6. Vote taken. Motion passed, favorable with amendment.

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes No

If yes, describe.

1. See highlighted requests **in red and yellow** above.

Committee Vote:

P. Porter	Yea
M. Conway	Yea
O. Ramos	Yea
J. Bullock	Absent
R. Dorsey	Yea
M. Parker	Yea
J. Torrence	Yea

Marguerite M. Currin

Marguerite M. Currin, Committee Staff
cc: Bill File

Date: April 14, 2026

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE VOTING RECORD

DATE: April 8, 2026

BILL: 25-0126

BILL TITLE: Accessibility in City Programs, Services, and Activities

MOTION BY: Ramos

FAVORABLE

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

UNFAVORABLE

WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION

NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Porter, Phylicia - Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conway, Mark - Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ramos, Odette	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parker, Mark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Torrence, James	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullock, John	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dorsey, Ryan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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TOTALS	<u>6</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>

CHAIRPERSON: Phylicia Porter



COMMITTEE STAFF: Marguerite M. Currin Initials: M.M.C.

Baltimore City Council Committee Hearing Attendance Record

Subject: Bill: Accessibility in City Programs, Services, and Activities	# 25-0126
Committee: Public Health and Environment	Chair: Phylcia Porter
Date: Wednesday, April 8, 2026	Time: 10:00 AM

Location: **Council Chambers**

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

What is your position on this bill?	Lobbyist: Are you registered in the City?*
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CHECK HERE TO TESTIFY



First Name	Last Name	Address / Organization / Email	Testify	For	Against	Yes	No
John	Doe	400 N. Holliday St. Johndoenbmore@yahoo.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Barbara	Dent	League of Women Voters of Baltimore City	✓	✓			✓
Nancy	Rini	League of Women Voters of Balto. City		✓			✓
DEANNA	TILDEN	BALTIMORE CITY ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF 1209 N CHARLES ST #213, BALTIMORE MD 21201	✓	✓			✓
Gabriel	Rubinitin	Disability Rights Maryland	✓	✓			✓
ALEX	MCLIN	BALTIMORE CITY ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF					
JOANN	ELLIOTT	BALTIMORE CITY ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF		✓			✓

*Jacob Leffler - online

*NOTE: IF YOU ARE COMPENSATED OR INCUR EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BILL, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER WITH THE CITY ETHICS BOARD AS A LOBBYIST. REGISTRATION CAN BE DONE ONLINE AND IS A SIMPLE PROCESS. FOR INFORMATION VISIT: [HTTPS://ETHICS.BALTIMORECITY.GOV/](https://ethics.baltimorecity.gov/) OR CALL: 410-396-4730



City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting Minutes - Final

Public Health & Environment Committee

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:00 AM Du Burns Council Chamber, 4th floor, City Hall, Phone:
1-408-418-9388, Access code: 2343 318 5066, Password: Public,
Link: [https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?
MTID=m4a0bdbc7c4d06161a495e2ed0a0e46d](https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?MTID=m4a0bdbc7c4d06161a495e2ed0a0e46d)

Council Bill 25-0126 - Accessibility in City Programs, Services, and Activities

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE

Present 6 - Phylcia Porter, Mark Conway, Mark Parker, Ryan Dorsey, James Torrence, and Odette Ramos
Absent 1 - John Bullock

ITEM SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

25-0126 Accessibility in City Programs, Services, and Activities

FOR the purpose of implementing subtitle A of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and 28 CFR Part 35 ("Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services"); establishing the mandate that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a City agency, or be subjected to discrimination by a City agency; defining certain terms; establishing a special effective date; and generally relating to the provision of public services to qualified individuals with a disability.

A motion was made by member Ramos that Ordinance 25-0126 be Recommended Favorably with Amendment. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Porter, Conway, Parker, Dorsey, Torrence, and Ramos

Absent: 1 - Bullock

ADJOURNMENT