




MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Michael Braverman, Housing Commissioner 

5/1/20

Date: April 29, 2020

Re: **City Council Bill 20-0526 Baltimore City COVID-19 Renter Relief Act**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 20-0526 for the purpose of prohibiting the increase of rent during and after certain declared emergencies; prohibiting certain notices to tenants; requiring certain notices to tenants; prohibiting certain late fees; defining certain terms; providing for a date of termination of the prohibitions; providing for a special effective date; and generally relating to protecting Baltimore City tenants.

If enacted City Council Bill 20-0526 would add to Article 13, Section 8-4 of the Housing and Urban Renewal Code language to bar rent increases during the State of Emergency. The Department of Housing and Community Development would be required to post on the agency website information regarding the requirements of the legislation including the date that an emergency expires and the date that is 90 days after the expiration of the emergency.

DHCD supports stable affordable housing during the State of Emergency and supports the intent of the Bill. DHCD is happy to assist the administration communicate information to communities throughout the City of Baltimore by sharing the requirements of the legislation with those renting properties including posting information related to the Renter Relief Act on the agency website. The Department does not foresee any adverse fiscal or operational impact on the agency resulting from the legislation. The Department recommends that the legislation be amended so that this information could also be shared along with other overall city actions related to the COVID-19 incident at <https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/>.

DHCD has reviewed City Council Bill 20-0526 and recommends **approval** by the City Council.

MB:sm