

July 1, 2011

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Fourth Floor, City Hall
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
c/o Karen Randle, Executive Secretary

Re: Bill 11-701 {"Public Ethics Law – Compliance with State Requirements"}

You have asked the Ethics Board to comment on Council Bill 11-701 {"Public Ethics Law – Compliance with State Requirements"}.

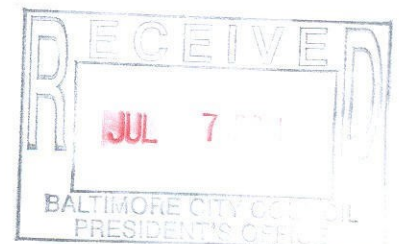
At its 2010 Regular Session, the General Assembly enacted Chapter 227 {"Public Ethics Laws – Elected Local Officials ... – Requirements"}. Among other things, the new State law:

- requires local ethics boards to amend their conflicts-of-interest and financial-disclosure requirements, as applicable to "elected local officials", so that those requirements are "equivalent to or exceed" their counterpart requirements in State law, and
- requires local ethics boards to certify to the State Ethics Commission, *on or before October 1, 2011*, and on or before October 1 of each subsequent year, that the local government is in compliance with this mandate.

As it happens, the City's Ethics Code has long treated "elected local officials" much the same as all other public servants. And, in 2005, the City Ethics Code was substantially revised to more closely parallel the State Ethics Code. Thus, the City Ethics Code is – for the most part – already in compliance with the mandate imposed by Chapter 277, Acts of 2010. Still, having consulted with the staff of the State Ethics Commission and having reviewed the implementing regulations adopted by the Commission, the Ethics Board discovered a few omissions in the City law.

Council Bill 11-701 would correct those omissions and place us in compliance. At the same time, it would serve generally to improve and strengthen the City Ethics Code.

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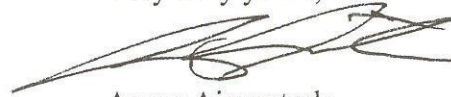


To: Baltimore City Council
From: Avery Aisenstark

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The Ethics Board recommends the passage of Council Bill 11-701.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Avery Aisenstark', written over a horizontal line.

Avery Aisenstark

xc: The Honorable James B. Kraft
Ms. Angela Gibson