



CITY OF BALTIMORE  
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

<b>TO</b>	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
<b>FROM</b>	Alice Kennedy, Commissioner, Housing and Community Development
<b>CC</b>	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
<b>DATE</b>	September 12, 2025
<b>SUBJECT</b>	25-0040 Zoning – Uses – Retail Small Box Establishment

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**Position: Favorable**

**BILL SYNOPSIS**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 25-0040 Zoning – Uses – Retail: Small Box Establishment for the purpose of making small box discount retail stores a conditional use by approval of the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals in all commercial zoning districts; setting use standards for new small box discount retail stores; and defining certain terms.

If enacted, Council Bill 25-0040 would create the new use definition of Retail: Small Box Establishment and make them conditional use by board in all commercial districts while establishing standards around minimum separation distance and discontinuance. If approved, this Bill will take effect on the 30<sup>th</sup> day after its enactment.

**SUMMARY OF POSITION**

This Bill will create a new use known as Retail: Small Box Establishment, broadly defined as retail stores with a floor area between 5,000 and 12,000 square feet, part of a chain with ten or more locations, and with “assorted inexpensive general goods for sale in small units.” Several exemptions to the new use definition are also provided to better hone its application. This Bill would render all Small Box Establishments within a half mile of each other to both non-conforming uses. While this would not have any initial effect on said Small Box Establishments, as they naturally close, they would not be able to be re-opened as such. Finally, this Bill greatly reduces the required timeframe to establish their discontinuance of use.

At its regular meeting of August 28, 2025, the Planning Commission concurred with its departmental staff and recommended that City Council Bill 25-0040 be approved by the City Council. DHCD also supports the approval of this legislation.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

As drafted, this Bill would have minimal fiscal or administrative impact on DHCD.

**AMENDMENTS**

DHCD does not seek any amendments to this Bill at this time.