

---

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT,  
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW  
EBONY M. THOMPSON,  
ACTING CITY SOLICITOR  
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET  
SUITE 101, CITY HALL  
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

---

January 12, 2024

Honorable President  
Members of the City Council  
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary  
409 City Hall  
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: Council Bill 23-0203R – Informational Hearing — BGE and Forestry

Dear President and Members:

The Law Department reviewed City Council Bill 23-0203R. The bill invites representatives from the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (“BGE”) and the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to discuss BGE’s approach to tree trimming and tree management when maintaining power lines and related equipment.

In general, Art. III, §9 of the City Charter and City Code Art. 1, §1-4 give the City Council authority to study or investigate the operation of City agencies and to make recommendations for the more effective operation of the agencies. Article III, §9 of the Charter requires department heads, municipal officers not embraced in a department, and members of commissions and boards to appear before the City Council if so requested to participate in the discussion of matters relating to their respective departments, offices, commissions, or boards. The Council cannot compel representatives from BGE to attend the hearing since BGE is not a City agency. See generally MD Code Public Utilities Article; COMAR, Title 20. A representative of BGE may appear voluntarily.

Council Bill 23-0203R is an appropriate resolution to initiate the informational hearing and request the specified officials to attend to discuss issues surrounding tree trimming and maintenance in the City. The Law Department approves Council Bill 23-0203R for form and legal sufficiency.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Toth".

Michele Toth  
Assistant Solicitor

cc: Nina Themelis  
Tiffany Maclin  
Elena DiPietro  
Hilary Ruley  
Jeff Hochstetler  
Ashlea Brown  
Teresa Cummings