
CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW

JAMES L. SHEA
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET
SUITE 101, CITY HALL
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

September 21, 2022

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

RE: Council Bill 22-0127R – Informational Hearing – 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Dear President and Members:

The Law Department reviewed City Council Bill 22-0127R. The bill requests representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department, the Baltimore City Fire Department, the Baltimore City Police Department, the Department of Finance, the Baltimore City Department of Law, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss the implementation of the national 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, its anticipated impact on individuals that use the resource, and the implementation plan for Baltimore City.

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 the Police Department to attend the informational hearing because the Police Department is a state agency. See Public Local Law, Subtitle 16. Representatives from the Police Department may appear voluntarily.

Council Bill 22-0127R is an appropriate resolution to initiate the informational hearing and request the specified officials to attend to discuss the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, the implementation plan for Baltimore City, and issues related to the impact of the Lifeline on

potential users of the resource. The Law Department approves Council Bill 22-0127R for form and legal sufficiency.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michele Toth".

Michele Toth
Special Solicitor

cc: Natasha Mehu
Nikki Thompson
Nina Themelis
Sofia Gebrehiwot
Elena DiPietro
Hilary Ruley
Ashlea Brown
Jeff Hochstetler
Dereka Bolden