

TRANSMITTAL MEMO

TO: Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, President, City Council
Members of City Council

FROM: Peter Little, Executive Director

DATE: October 14, 2008

RE: ORDINANCE 08-0193



PARKING
OF BALTIMORE CITY
AUTHORITY

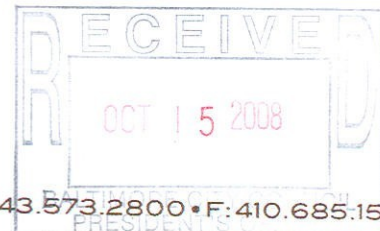
I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 08-0193 introduced by The Council President, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake at the request of The Administration (Parking Authority).

The purpose of this bill is regulating the provision of valet parking services; requiring valet parking operators to be licensed; requiring permits for valet parking zones; establishing certain standards of operation; defining certain terms; imposing certain penalties; providing for certain appeals and reviews; correcting, clarifying, and conforming related provisions governing passenger loading zones and freight loading zones; designating passenger loading zones, freight loading zones, and valet parking zones as impoundment areas; clarifying responsibility for collecting applicable parking taxes; providing for a special effective date; and generally relating to the licensing and regulation of valet parking services.

The Parking Authority believes that well managed valet parking operations are beneficial to the City of Baltimore because they often help to better utilize parking supply in a given area, particularly in areas where on-street parking is in high demand. Valet parking services have proven to be vital to many businesses in the City of Baltimore, and as the City experiences growth in the hospitality industry, the use of valet parking services is growing. This growth has been generally unregulated causing problems for neighboring residents, businesses and travelers on the City's streets. Many complaints have been received over the years by City officials, City agencies and the Parking Authority regarding abuses, and alleged abuses, by valet operators (i.e. blocking roadways; speeding; using public streets to park the vehicles; uninsured valet companies). By allowing valet operators to use the public right-of-way to conduct their business, the City also has some responsibility to regulate those activities to ensure public safety, to protect neighborhoods, and to protect consumers.

The Parking Authority believes that the proposed regulations offer those protections of public safety, neighborhoods and consumers by providing the following:

- The review of a valet operator's valet parking plan for a given site before a license is granted to perform valet services there, to insure that it is a safe and sound plan for the neighborhood
- The proper use of passenger loading zones for valet parking purposes (i.e. cars are not to be "parked" in those zones)



- Insuring that valet-parked cars are parked in off-street facilities, and not on City streets (especially residential streets)
- That valet parking operators be properly insured (to protect consumers should their vehicle be damaged by a valet parker)
- To give the City recourse should valet operators drive recklessly through City streets or constantly block the flow of traffic

The Parking Authority believes that these regulations should be welcomed as they provide structure for the application and operation of valet parking services. This structure is currently lacking in the City, causing uncertainty for valet operators, hosts, and the parking public.

For the reasons noted above, the Baltimore City Parking Authority supports the passage of City Council Bill 08-0193.