

CITY OF BALTIMORE

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

334 City Hall  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**TO:** The Honorable Stephanie Rawlings Blake  
and Members of the Baltimore City Council  
Room 400 City Hall,  
100. N. Holiday Street  
**Attn: Karen Randle**

**FROM:** Sheryl Goldstein, Director, Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice

**DATE:** October 22, 2008

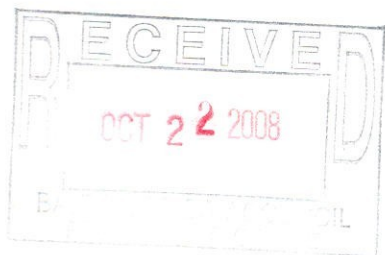
**RE:** City Council Bill No. 08-0118 – Confiscated Assets for Neighborhoods

**City Council Bill No.:** 08-0118 – Confiscated Assets for Neighborhoods

The Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice (MOCJ) and the Baltimore Police Department support this legislation that would appropriate a portion of the money that is confiscated by the Baltimore Police Department and forfeited to the City each year to fund neighborhood-based public safety initiatives.


In order to improve public safety, Mayor Dixon has developed a strategy that is focused on targeted enforcement, community engagement, and building strong partnerships. We are making progress – homicides and shootings are at historic lows. Building on our progress depends heavily on our capacity to engage residents in the fight against crime.

MOCJ operates Operation Crime Watch, a program that focuses specifically on mobilizing citizens to participate in neighborhood-based public safety initiatives such as block watch and citizens on patrol programs. These programs help reduce criminal activity and strengthen relationships between police and citizens. Through the efforts of the BPD and MOCJ, the City currently has 29 active Citizen on Patrol Groups that patrol over 35 City neighborhoods. In the last year, 5 new groups have been created.



Additionally, this year MOCJ administered a Citizens on Patrol Community Grants Program. This program provided grants of up to \$2,500 to COP groups to purchase equipment, supplies or other items to support their work. For example, walking patrol groups may need flashlights and reflective vests while driving patrols may want to purchase magnetic labels for cars or update equipment used to communicate with police. These grants help current COP groups become more effective by improving their visibility and ability to communicate with police as they patrol their communities.

This legislation would create a reliable funding source for the continued develop of neighborhood-based public safety strategies, which are critical to reducing crime and improving public safety in our City.



Sheryl Goldstein  
Director  
Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice