



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE
Mayor

Acting Police Commissioner

September 21, 2012

TO: The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400 City Hall
Attn. Karen Randle

FROM: James H. Green, ^{WJG} Deputy Chief Legal Counsel
Baltimore Police Department

RE: City Council Bill 12-0064-Burglar Alarms-No Fees for User Registrations



The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) has reviewed City Council Bill 12-0064-Burglar Alarms-No Fees for User Registrations which requests that a burglar alarm user not be charged a fee for registering an alarm with the Police Commissioner, lowering the fine for burglar alarm violations and additional amendments to the Code relating to burglar alarms.

As the Council is aware, Baltimore City has collectively worked very hard to reduce the number of false alarms responses. The False Alarm Reduction Program began in Baltimore in 2003. It was modeled after similar programs throughout the country. At that time there were in excess of 81,000 false alarm calls for service. In 2011, there were approximately 35,000 false alarm responses. Each alarm requires a priority BPD response in order to determine whether or not it is valid and take the officer out of service until it is resolved. The department recognizes that there are a number of reasons that can be attributed to a false alarm however we must continue to work to reduce them so that the prioritization of policing services can be appropriately directed.

Since 2010, the Department of Housing Code Enforcement Section has taken over the responsibilities in managing the Program. The results have been immediate and have allowed the City to quickly identify repeat violators. This has also netted a substantial cost saving to the City in the administration of the Program. The BPD understands that

*Comments/
refers to
HCD*

there are shared responsibilities between the agencies however defer all management and cost discussions to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

cc: Angela Gibson, Mayor's Legislative Liaison