



BALTIMORE CITY
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Michael Braverman, Housing Commissioner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MB", is placed to the right of the name Michael Braverman.

Date: October 21, 2019

Re: **City Council Bill 19-0163R Informational Hearing: "Closed Means Closed" - Clarifying 311 Services' Approach to Resolving Requests**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 19-0163R for the purpose of inviting representatives from 311 Services, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, BGE, and the Mayor's Office of Performance and Innovation to appear before the City Council to discuss the effectiveness of 311 resolving complaints and referring tasks to other agencies.

DHCD provides a variety of services for Baltimore City residents. When a complaint comes into the 311 system it is routed to the appropriate agency for investigation. DHCD's Housing Code Enforcement inspectors are the "eyes for the City," they respond to a variety of issues including but not limited to; property code enforcement issues like high grass and weeds, trash and debris, vacant properties and abandoned vehicles on private property. DHCD does not control the outcome of a request but are the first to respond to a complaint. DHCD has 79 Housing Code Enforcement inspectors who respond to 266,000 SRs last year.

DHCD has 10 Special Investigations investigators. They respond to complaints such as; illegal dumping, use permits, zoning enforcement, alarms and property registration. DHCD's Special Investigations inspectors respond to an average of 10,000 SRs a year.

DHCD has reviewed City Council Bill 19-0163R and believes that the terminology used to describe the status of SRs should be updated to more accurately reflect the progress of a request. For instance, rather than "Closed," language such as "Inspected" could be used, along with providing additional resources for tracking the request. DHCD recommends that the Baltimore City Office of Information & Technology and the Mayor's Office of Performance and Innovation lead the effort to upgrade the pioneering 311-service system to more effectively meet the needs of Baltimore City residents.

MB:sm

cc: Mr. Nicholas Blendy, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*