

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Rudolph S. Chow, P.E., Director
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL 15-0504

CITY of
BALTIMORE
MEMO

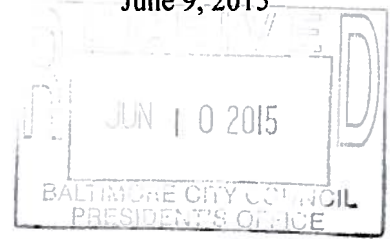


TO

DATE:

June 9, 2015

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin
Room 400 – City Hall



I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 15-0504 introduced by Council Members Stokes, Kraft, Costello, President Young, Council Members Middleton, Scott, Holton, Henry, Reisinger, Clarke and Welch.

The purpose of the Bill is to require certain City bills, invoices, and other statements to contain a warning of the potential consequences of a failure to pay.

The City of Baltimore may impose a lien on a property for unpaid taxes and municipal charges. (Article II General Powers, Baltimore City Charter) The Department of Public Works issues the following municipal charges that could result in liens should these charges remain unpaid: Water and Sewer Charges; Stormwater Fees; and Industrial Surcharges. Environmental Citations issued under Article 1 § 40-11 for certain violations of Article 23 (Sanitation), Article 24 (Water) or the Property Maintenance Code (Building, Fire and Related Codes) are also subject to lien if not paid.

City Council Bill 15-0504, if approved, would require that every bill, invoice or other statement that could constitute a lien on real property include a warning that failure to pay could result in a lien against the property and lead to foreclosure and sale of the property. The current water and sewer bills have limited space on which to add information. Delinquency and turnoff notice statements are added to water and sewer bills to alert customers to their unpaid account balances and potential consequences. In addition, the State legislature just mandated a requirement for a stormwater fee statement to be added to customers' bills. Adding another statement to these bills may require some flexibility to meet the "prominently placed" standard. Furthermore, not knowing how many City billings and statements are subject to the provisions of this bill, the Council may want to consider allotting more than the 30 day period after enactment in which to comply.

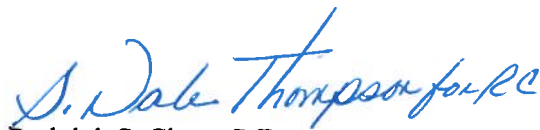
The Department of Law reviewed this legislation and recommended an amendment to correct the wording of the warning statement so that it accurately reflects the lien process.

No obj

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
June 9, 2015
Page 2

Subject to the concern regarding the placement standard for the statement on billings, the Department of Public Works has no objection to the passage of City Council Bill 15-0504 as proposed to be amended by the Department of Law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Dale Thompson for PC". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rudolph S. Chow, P.E.
Director

RSC/MMC:ela