


Andrew Klein

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Andrew Kleine, Chief	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Bureau of the Budget and Management Research Room 432 City Hall (410 396-4941)		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill #14-0315 Charter Amendment-Sustainability Funds		

TO

DATE: February 3, 2014

The Honorable President and
 Members of the City Council
 Room 400, City Hall
 Attention: Ms. Karen Randle

City Council Bill #14-0315 has been introduced for the purpose of modifying the revenue sources that may be dedicated to special funds established for promoting sustainability, maintaining and establishing parks and other open spaces, and cleaning and preserving the natural environment within the City of Baltimore; and submitting this amendment to the qualified voters of the City for adoption or rejection.

The city charter authorizes special, nonlapsing funds for the purposes of affordable housing, sustainability, and education. In all cases, the revenue sources are limited to money appropriated to the fund in the annual Ordinance of Estimates and grants or donations made to the fund. This bill would add a third source for sustainability-related funds: proceeds from fines, fees, and programs dedicated to the fund by ordinance.

The Department of Finance opposes Bill Number 14-0315 for two primary reasons. First, the designation of funds for a particular purpose, in this case to support sustainability efforts, limits the flexibility of current or future Administrations to allocate resources according to current priorities and to manage revenue shortfalls. The Department of Finance believes that decisions regarding the allocation of resources among priorities, including sustainability efforts, ought to be part of the annual budget planning process. Second, to the extent this bill provides the City Council the authority to dedicate proceeds from fines, fees and programs to this fund by ordinance, it could potentially put the City's operating budget at risk during the course of a given fiscal year.

cc: Harry Black
 Angela Gibson



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