
CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW
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June 9, 2026

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Attn: Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 26-0202 – Charter Amendment – Department of Water and Wastewater

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 26-0202 for form and legal sufficiency. The bill—entitled a resolution—would transfer duties related to the City’s water supply and sewers from the Department of Public Works (“DPW”) to a new Department of Water and Wastewater (“DWW”). The resolution establishes the DWW, provides for a Director of Water and Wastewater as its head, and details various duties of the new Department. These changes would take effect January 1, 2029.

Under Section 5 of Article XI-A of the Maryland Constitution, a resolution of the Mayor and City Council, such as this one, is an appropriate method of initiating an amendment to the Baltimore City Charter. If enacted, the resolution would be placed on the ballot at the City’s next general election and, if approved by the voters, the amendment would be adopted and become part of the Charter 30 days after the election. Md. Constit., Art. XI-A, § 5.

The Law Department can approve the bill for form and legal sufficiency. However, the Council may wish to consider the following points:

- 1) Whether it wishes to include a provision covering the appointment of a DWW Deputy Director and clarifying that the Deputy shall be the Acting Director upon the DWW Director’s unavailability; such a provision would mirror what currently exists for DPW in Section 29(a) and (b) of Article VII.
- 2) Whether removal of the word “drain” from proposed Section 150(c) is intentional, given that the term exists in current Section 34 of Article VII and is also included in Section (31) of Article II of the Charter (“Sewers”) and in relevant portions of Subtitle 20 of the Public Local Laws (“Sewers”).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey Hochstetler', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Hochstetler
Chief Solicitor

cc: Ebony Thompson, City Solicitor
Nina Themlis, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Ty'lor Schnella, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor, General Counsel Division
Ashlea Brown, Chief Solicitor
Michelle Toth, Assistant Solicitor
Desireé Luckey, Assistant Solicitor