



SHEILA DIXON
Mayor

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



FREDERICK H. BEALEFELD, III
Police Commissioner

June 10, 2008

TO: The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle
Room 400 City Hall

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

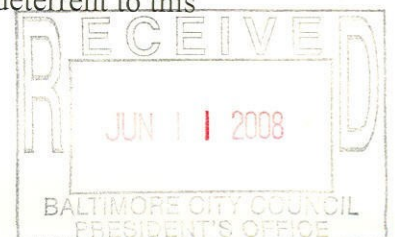
RE: City Council Resolution No. 08-0047-"Dirt Bikes"-Unregistered
Motorcycles and Similar Vehicles-Forfeiture Proceeding

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) supports the adoption of City Council Bill No. 08-0047-"Dirt Bikes"-Unregistered Motorcycles and Similar Vehicles-Forfeiture Proceeding. The Bill requires that in order to own, control, or possess a dirt bike or any unregistered vehicle that the vehicle be securely locked or immobilized. Additionally, the Bill is designed to strengthen and clarify the forfeiture procedures.

Each year the BPD is faced with the many issues surrounding the illegal riding of "dirt bikes" in Baltimore. Many citizens are threatened by the operators of these vehicles who fail to follow any rules of the road and zoom in and out of traffic on the city streets. There is a very serious public and personal safety risk to all citizens including the riders posed by the illegal operation of these vehicles. The BPD officers are left with few options other than arrest of the operator(s) and are not allowed to chase the riders because of the associated dangers. The "bikes" are often abandoned and reclaimed by the owners who indicate that they have been stolen. While it is recognized that there are recreational uses for these vehicles outside of Baltimore City, it is reasonable that when they are housed in the City, they be securely immobilized.

According to the Baltimore City Towing Section, from January 1, 2008-May 30, 2008, 232 dirt bikes and sixty-three (63) all-terrain vehicles were seized and towed to the impound lot for storage. These vehicles come into the City's possession under numerous circumstances including their seizure for being illegally operated, as abandoned property, and as stolen property. The seizure and forfeiture of dirt bikes or similar vehicles can be a very effective enforcement tool against the persons who violate this law and will also serve as a deterrent to this type of crime.

c/o 242 W. 29th Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21211



The BPD is very pleased to share additional information with the Council on this issue. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

cc: Frederick Bealefeld, Police Commissioner, BPD
Ronald Levitan, Chief of Legal Affairs, BPD
Angela Gibson, Mayor's Legislative Liaison
Sheryl Goldstein, MOCJ