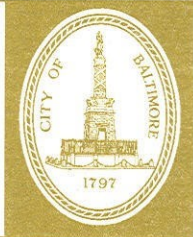


CITY OF BALTIMORE

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

334 City Hall
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

TO: The Honorable Stephanie Rawlings Blake
and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400 City Hall,
100. N. Holiday Street
Attn: Karen Randle

FROM: Sheryl Goldstein, Director, Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice

DATE: July 9, 2008

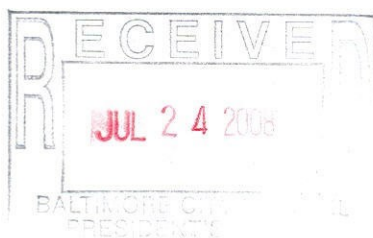
RE: City Council Bill No. 08-0142

City Council Bill No.: 08-0142 – **Controlled Dangerous Substances –
Nonresident Buyers**

The Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice (MOCJ) opposes this legislation that would impose a civil penalty on non residents who come to the City to buy controlled dangerous substances.

MOCJ recommends instead investing in strategies that reduce drug dependence, reduce drug offender recidivism, and prevent drug use as a critical component of addressing crime in our city and making residents both safer and healthier.

As of October, thirty-three percent of arrests made by the Baltimore Police Department have been for drug crimes and many more are surely narcotics-related. There have been 6,134 felony narcotics arrests and 15,998 misdemeanor narcotics arrests so far this year. In order to reduce these numbers, Baltimore City must increase the availability of programs that successfully rehabilitate drug-users. The Health Department is currently working to expand the City's capacity to offer drug-abusers "treatment on demand." And, the criminal justice system has developed drug treatment courts and other alternatives to detention that should be expanded to help rehabilitate drug users and reduce drug related crime.

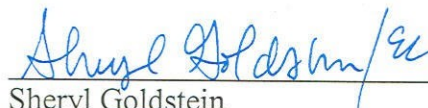


unfair comment

Baltimore City has Drug Treatment Courts operating at both the Circuit and District Courts. These courts have been successful in rehabilitating drug abusers and reducing rates of recidivism for drug-related crimes and should be expanded. These programs provide an alternative to incarceration for drug-involved, nonviolent offenders. Drug court judges impose harsher sentences but suspend these sentences on the condition of compliance with a proscribed drug court regimen. The threat of incarceration gives drug court participants extra incentive to get clean and utilize vocational, educational, and life skills training to address issues that contribute to drug abuse and criminal behavior.

Research provides strong evidence that drug courts produce lasting changes in their clients. Nationally, drug treatment court programs have emerged as a practical, cost-effective alternative to incarceration, and re-arrest rates for drug court graduates are significantly lower than for the general population.

Drug abuse threatens the well-being of drug users, their families, and communities. Our efforts should be devoted to expanding successful drug treatment strategies and programs in order to reduce drug-abuse, relapse and recidivism, and increase the health, safety, and productivity of Baltimore's residents and families.



Sheryl Goldstein

Director

Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice

