

COMPTROLLER

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OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER

Department of Audits
Department of Real Estate
Municipal Post Office
Municipal Telephone Exchange
Harbor Master

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable James B. Kraft, Chair, Judiciary and Legislative
Investigations Committee

FROM: Honorable Joan M. Pratt, CPA *JmPratt*
Comptroller

RE: Council Bill 10-0445 Public Ethics Law – Ethics Board Composition,
Tenure, etc. - Ethics Training

DATE: February 24, 2010

I support legislation to reconstitute the Baltimore City Board of Ethics, with the following requests for clarification/and or further review:

1. Section 3-2(a)(2) (page 4, line 3), provides the Mayor may reject a nominee of the President of the City Council or the Comptroller only for “cause.” There is no definition of “cause” for this purpose. “Cause” should be defined.
2. Section 3-20 (b)(2) – An exception to the training, is permitted for “an official, who within the 5 years preceding his or her appointment or reappointment, completed a training course provided under this section.”

It is recommended that this exception be deleted. To assure that officials are aware of and remain informed of the ethics laws and in the interest of protecting the public by reinforcing high ethical standards, the training should be a requirement upon appointment or reappointment. Five years is a long period of time. Such a period between training may result in lapses in understanding of the requirements and the importance of the ethics laws.

F/A

