

Andrew Klein

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Andrew Kleine, Chief
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Bureau of Budget and Management Research Room 432 (410)396-4941
	SUBJECT	City Council CCB 12-0064 – Burglar Alarms – No Fees For User Registration

CITY of
BALTIMORE
MEMO



TO

Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
C/O Karen Randle
Room 409, City Hall



DATE: September 24, 2012

This CCB 12-0064 – Burglar Alarms – No Fees For User Registration is for the purpose of eliminating fees associated with the registration of alarms and lowering certain fines associated with burglar alarm violations.

Analysis

This bill will amend Subtitle 8 of the Police Ordinances Article, Article 19, of the Baltimore City Code. Subtitle 8, Burglar Alarms – Registration and Regulation, contains sections dealing with both the registration of alarm systems and the fee structures for false alarms and unregistered systems. CCB 12-0064 would alter and amend Subtitle 8 of Article 19 by adding section 8-5(c) which would prohibit the charging of fees for the registration, or renewal of registration, of alarm systems; and amending section 8-8(b) to alter the fee structure for false alarms, eliminating any distinction between commercial and noncommercial users, lowering the fees for false alarms occurring more than 8 times in a 12-month period, and capping the maximum fee for a false alarm at \$500. Additionally, this bill would amend sections 40-14 and 41-14 of Article 1 of the Baltimore City Code to alter the civil penalties for unregistered alarms, lowering the existing penalties for users from \$250 for each occurrence to \$50 for the first occurrence, \$100 for the second occurrence, and \$150 for each occurrence thereafter.

Fiscal Impact

This bill does not alter the required activity of the agency overseeing the registration of alarm systems in the City (currently the Department of Housing and Community Development). Alarm system users and the companies that monitor alarm systems in the City will need to continue registering with the City on an annual basis. Nor does this bill alter the required response to reported alarms by the City Police Department. Accordingly, this bill will not alter the expenditures associated with the alarm registration system in Baltimore City.

What the bill will do is cut City revenues by altering the fee structure for false alarms and eliminating entirely the fee for registering an alarm system. In FY2012, the City received \$618,063 in alarm registration fees of the \$1.5M billed. The City received \$373,513 in revenues from false alarm fines. It is estimated that this bill will reduce these fines by

unfair

\$143,000. It is estimated that this bill will result in a loss of over \$761,063 in revenues to the City.

Recommendation

The Finance Department opposes CC Bill 12-0064.

CC: Harry Black
William Voorhees
Angela Gibson