


*Robert Cennamo*

<b>FROM</b>	NAME & TITLE	Robert Cennamo, Budget Director	CITY of <b>BALTIMORE</b> <b>MEMO</b>	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Bureau of the Budget and Management Research Room 432, City Hall (410) 396-4774		
	SUBJECT	Council Bill 20-0492 – Charter Amendment – City Council – Reduction in Size		

DATE:

**TO**

The Honorable President and  
Members of the City Council  
City Hall, Room 400

March 3, 2020

**Position: Oppose**

The Department of Finance is herein reporting on City Council Bill 20-0492, Charter Amendment-City Council-Reduction in Size, the purpose of which is to reduce the size of the City Council from 14 members to 9 members. This bill provides that 6 members will be elected from council districts and 3 at-large. The bill provides that the City Council members shall appoint a President, Vice President, and representative to the Planning Commission from the at large members.

**Background**

The composition of the City Council was last changed in November 2002 through a Charter amendment, confirmed by the voters. The City Council previously contained 6 three-member districts and a City Council President elected at-large for a total of 19 members. The final details were prescribed into law by the Mayor and City Council. The first election under the new City Council structure was in November 2004.

**Fiscal Impact**

Although the legislation prescribes fewer City Council members, the scope of the offices will change in order to maintain the current level of service and demonstrate best practices as modeled by peer cities. Organizationally, at-large and district council offices are distinct entities. The newly created at-large City Council member offices will require accommodations comparable to the current structure of the City Council President’s Office. This includes an increased salary for the at-large councilmember, senior staff who have citywide responsibilities, and additional community relations staff to reach each district.

District offices will also gain additional staff to supplement the increased workload of having larger districts. Currently, district offices are budgeted for four positions, including the councilmember, technician, secretary, and assistant. To maintain the current level of service for district residents, each office would gain an additional secretary position.

The Office of the City Council President would be preserved as the official administration for the agency. The at-large member selected to be City Council President would lead both the Office of the City Council President and an at-large office. This is based on the precedent in peer cities, such as Philadelphia, and to maintain adequate service for internal operations.

Below is one example of a staffing structure that would be cost neutral compared to the current model.

Position Class Title	Current			Proposed		
	Number	Cost	Total Amt.	Number	Cost	Total Amt.
<b>District</b>						
Council Member	14	105,245	1,473,430	6	105,245	631,470
Council Technician	14	89,680	1,255,520	6	89,680	538,080
Secretary City Council	14	70,158	982,212	12	70,158	841,896
Council Assistant	14	64,623	904,722	6	64,623	387,738
<b>At-Large</b>						
At-Large Council Member	1	171,064	171,064	3	171,064	513,192
Operations Officer III	0	-	-	3	128,813	386,439
Operations Officer I	1	129,595	129,595	6	118,108	708,648
Neighborhood Liaison	10	88,751	887,510	18	88,751	1,597,518
Council Assistant	0	-	-	3	64,623	193,869
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>		<b>5,804,053</b>	<b>63</b>		<b>5,798,850</b>

**Other Considerations**

One potential consequence of this legislation is an increased cost for candidates running for office. At-large members and larger districts require more resources to support effective voter outreach efforts of campaigns. This could also impact who is able to run for these positions because it favors incumbents and candidate slates.

**Conclusion**

Although this legislation is cost neutral, the Department of Finance believes that major changes to the structure of the City’s government should go through a Charter Review Commission. Making changes to complex structures such as representation of City residents could have unintended consequences if not appropriately considered.

**For the reasons stated above, the Department of Finance opposes City Council Bill 20-0492.**

cc: Henry Raymond  
 Matthew Stegman  
 Nina Themelis