
CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT

Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW

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January 6, 2026

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council

Attn: Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 25-0068 – Study and Report – Returning Citizen-Owned and Employing Businesses

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 25-0068 for form and legal sufficiency. The bill would require the Department of Finance to conduct a disparity study to determine whether a disparity exists between the number of available businesses that are owned by returning citizens, or whose employees are comprised of 50% or more returning citizens, providing goods or services in specified business categories and the number who are contracting with the City as a prime contractor or subcontractor. The bill also describes the topics to be addressed in the report, establishes a completion deadline of two years after enactment, requires publication of the report no later than 180 days after the conclusion of the study, and requires City Council to call a hearing on the findings of the report.

The City Council has the power to investigate “in furtherance of its legislative function,” 4 McQuillin Mun. Corp. § 13:7, and it may “pass any ordinance, not inconsistent with the provisions of [the City] Charter or the laws of the State . . . as it may deem proper in maintaining the peace, good government, health and welfare of Baltimore City,” City Charter, Art. II, § (47). Moreover, Section 2(a) of Article VII of the Charter allows for ordinances to give additional duties to “a department, officer, commission, board or other municipal agency” so long as those duties are “consistent with the Charter and subject to the supervision of a superior municipal officer or agency.” Accordingly, it is within the power of the City Council to require the designated agency to conduct the study and report on returning citizen-owned and employing businesses.

As there are no legal impediments to this bill, the Law Department can approve it for form and legal sufficiency

Sincerely,



Desireé Luckey
Assistant Solicitor

cc: Ebony Thompson, City Solicitor
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor, General Counsel Division
Jeff Hochstetler, Chief Solicitor
Ashlea Brown, Chief Solicitor
Michelle Toth, Assistant Solicitor