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	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL 10-0516

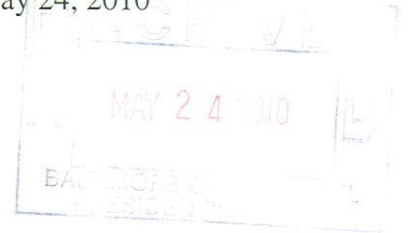
CITY of
BALTIMORE
MEMO



TO

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle
Room 400 - City Hall

DATE: May 24, 2010



I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 10-0516 introduced by Council President Young and Council Members Curran, Cole, Middleton, Henry, Kraft, Branch, D'Adamo, Holton, Conaway, Clarke, Reisinger and Welch.

The purpose of the Bill is to extend the registration requirements for non-owner-occupied dwelling units to encompass vacant structures; modify the information required for registration statements; modify the fees for registration; modify or repeal certain registration fee exceptions; modify the civil penalty for violation of these registration requirements; repeal the license fee for multiple-family dwellings and rooming houses; repeal certain obsolete provisions; define and redefine certain terms; correct, clarify, and conform related provisions; and generally relating to the registration of non-owner-occupied dwellings and vacant structures and to the licensing of multiple-family dwellings and rooming houses.

The Department of Public Works, Bureau of Solid Waste, provides cleaning and boarding services of vacant structures identified by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). In Fiscal Year 2009 the Bureau of Solid Waste responded to 37,986 requests for cleaning and boarding of these blighting structures. Vacant housing that is not maintained attracts trash, debris, rats, illicit activities, and can become a fire hazard. The health and safety of communities can be threatened by these structures. Neighboring properties can also be impacted by water pipes that break in vacants and flood adjacent structures. With notification by DHCD, the Bureau of Water and Wastewater cuts off water service to vacant properties if damage to adjacent properties is imminent, to reduce the potential for breakage and flooding.

Current law requires a property registration fee for any non-owner-occupied residential unit. City Council Bill 10-0516 continues the \$30 per dwelling unit for properties with one and two dwelling units, and the \$35 per dwelling unit for multiple family dwellings, plus a \$25 per rooming unit fee. The registration cap of \$5,000 for each owner of record in existing law is removed. The legislation creates a \$100 annual registration fee for residential structures and \$250 annual registration fee for all other structures that are subject to a vacant building notice. Not-for-profit religious, charitable or educational institutions would be subject to the vacant structures fee. This legislation allows these fees to be collected as part of the registration process for efficiency purposes. The Bill also incorporates the State requirement that a multi-family dwelling license be withheld if the structure is not in compliance with State and federal

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lead paint laws and is subject to an unabated violation notice issued under § 115 {Unsafe Structures} of the City's Building Code. Finally, the legislation establishes citation penalties for unregistered vacant residential properties and non-residential properties of \$500 each.

The Department of Public Works recognizes that structures subject to vacant building notices can create quality of life and financial hardships for our citizens and City government. Based on these findings, the Department of Public Works supports passage of City Council Bill 10-0516.



David E. Scott, P.E.
Director

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