



SHEILA DIXON
Mayor

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



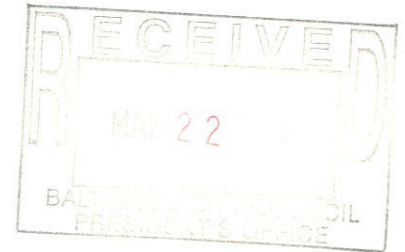
FREDERICK H. BEALEFELD, III
Police Commissioner

May 21, 2008

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

FROM: James H. Green, ^{JHG} Deputy Legal Counsel
Baltimore Police Department

RE: City Council Bill No. 08-0064-Scrap Metal Processors-Second-Hand
Property Dealers-Reporting Requirements



The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) supports the adoption of City Council Bill No. 08-0064-Scrap Metal Processors-Second-Hand Property Dealers-Reporting Requirements with amendments. The proposed legislation would expand the definition of reportable items for scrap metal processors and second-hand property dealers to include motor vehicle parts.

Baltimore City regulates scrap metal processors and second hand property dealers in the Consumer Protections Article of the Baltimore City Code. During the 2008 Maryland General Assembly's Session, several bills were introduced in an attempt to develop uniform statewide regulations in this industry, expand the definition of reportable items, and to require electronic reporting. Several Maryland jurisdictions including Baltimore have developed regulations in this area but it became very clear that statewide legislation is necessary to promote overall regulation in this industry and information sharing by law enforcement. Unfortunately, this proposed legislation failed but there were many lessons learned and good ideas shared by many interested parties who worked on addressing overall concerns.

The overriding goal of developing regulation is to reduce the number of metal thefts occurring in Maryland and to provide necessary information for law enforcement to conduct timely investigations. As market values of non-ferrous metals continue to increase, all Maryland jurisdictions, including Baltimore, will see a corresponding increase in the number of thefts. Recent examples of theft

include the much publicized thefts of catalytic converters and aluminum light poles. A number of investigations show that items from one jurisdiction are sold in a neighboring jurisdiction. The BPD works closely with neighboring jurisdictions but without standardized and timely reporting, investigations are compromised. Although, the current law provides that the reporting may be in an electronic form, the development and implementation of mandatory electronic reporting requirements is a necessary step towards assisting law enforcement investigations and thereby reducing the incentive for metal thefts.

Baltimore has among the strongest regulations in Maryland for this industry. The BPD is encouraged that the Council is willing to take further affirmative steps to regulate this industry. The BPD is pleased to work with the City Council to expand the definition of reportable items and to develop and implement stronger reporting requirements in order to have the maximum impact in reducing the incentive for metal thefts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

cc: Frederick Bealefeld, Police Commissioner, BPD
Karen Hornig, Chief of Legal Affairs, BPD
Angela Gibson, Mayor's Legislative Liaison
Sheryl Goldstein, MOCJ