



BALTIMORE HOUSING

SHEILA DIXON
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO
Executive Director, HABC
Commissioner, HCDC

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, Executive Secretary

From: Paul T. Graziano, Commissioner

Date: April 7, 2009

Re: **City Council Bill 09-0309 Building, Fire, and Related Codes - Enforcement**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 09-0309, which was introduced for the purpose of authorizing the issuance of prepayable environmental citations to enforce certain violations of the Building, Fire, and Related Codes Article; revising the manner in which a stop-work order is to be issued; requiring the removal from construction sites and from abutting sidewalks, gutters, and alleys, of accumulated trash, garbage, waste, and debris and of nuisances; making the registered owner of a vehicle responsible for certain parking, keeping, and storing violations; and generally relating to the enforcement of the Building, Fire, and Related Codes Article.

City Council Bill 09-0309 would grant DHCD's Housing Code Enforcement (HCE) additional authority to issue citations for failing to abate vacant, condemned, and other violation notices and for failing to comply with a stop work order. The citations would be issued after a property owner has failed to abate a violation notice. This new authority would represent a shift in our code enforcement strategy as it would streamline the process and compel violators to undertake corrective action in a timely period.

In addition to expanding citation authority, City Council Bill 09-0309 would create a separate code offense for failing to comply with a stop work order punishable by up to 90 days in jail. Additionally, the bill defines the required maintenance and cleanliness standards of construction sites and authorizes enforcement by citation for violation of these standards. The legislation also amends the Property Maintenance Code to make registered owners of vehicles parked or stored illegally culpable for an issued citation. Currently, the code limited HCE to cite only the owner of the property where the vehicle is parked and thus allowed the vehicle owner to avoid direct responsibility.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the adoption of City Council Bill 09-0309.

PTG:pmd

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson
Mr. Andrew Frank
Ms. Diane Hutchins

