



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Amber Green, Chief Equity Office, Office of Equity and Civil Rights
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	3/10/2026
SUBJECT	26-0144 – Baltimore City Policies and Procedures - Safe Spaces and Communities

POSITION: Favorable with Amendment

BILL SYNOPSIS

The Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) has reviewed and is herein reporting on City Council Bill 26-0144 – *Baltimore City Policies and Procedures - Safe Spaces and Communities*.

This is an ordinance that accomplishes the following:

- Define terms related to federal immigration enforcement.
- Prohibit covered entities from engaging in acts related to federal immigration enforcement, such as:
 - Entering into agreements to house individuals for detention
 - Enforce federal immigration laws
 - Expend/use city funds, resources, or personnel
 - Condition a city service or benefit
 - Allow access to a non-public space to an immigration official
 - Allow access to an individual being detained by the covered entity
 - Allow use of a facility, information, or equipment
- Prohibit discrimination by a covered entity against an individual based on actual or perceived immigration status.
- Provide for a procedure to handle requests from an immigration official.
- Prohibit covered entities from asking to disclose, storing, or investigating an individual's immigration status.
- Require covered entities to develop an immigration enforcement action response plan.
- Require covered entities to report annually the number of immigration enforcement-related requests received and how they were handled.

- Require the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs develop a training on the rights and responsibilities of this article to be delivered to cover entities.
- Prohibit the Baltimore Police Department from engaging in, assisting, or supporting immigration enforcement.
- Require Baltimore Police Department Officers de-escalate threats to life or public safety during an immigration enforcement action.
- Establish a procedure in which the Baltimore Police Department shall respond to immigration enforcement actions, including:
 - Ask an immigration official if an individual is being held pursuant to a warrant, court order, or probable cause
 - Request the name of the individual being held
 - Document the immigration enforcement action on the body-worn camera
 - Verify and document the immigration enforcement official’s identity and credentials.
- Provide 90 days for covered entities to enter compliance with the ordinance.
- Provide for an immediate effective date of the ordinance.

The bill accomplishes this by adding Sections 4-1 to 4-6 to Article IV and Section 2-3 to Article XVII of the Baltimore City Code.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The protections Baltimore’s immigrant residents and their families enacted by City Council Bill 26-0144 are likely to bolster equity, improve immigrant residents/families' sense of safety and belonging, and promote access to city services for residents vulnerable to federal immigration enforcement actions or profiling. An important improvement in this bill is granting recourse to those who are violated under the bill through the City’s anti-discrimination law, Article IV of the Baltimore City Code.

Explicit anti-discrimination protections for immigrants in Baltimore City are rightly placed within Article IV of the Baltimore City Code and should be based on national origin, immigration documentation status, and/or citizenship status, whether actual or perceived. While the CRC currently protects against discrimination based on national origin in public accommodations under Article IV, Subtitle 3-2 of the Baltimore City Code, that differs slightly from the citizenship status protection this bill grants. It is also important to protect people against discrimination based on their *perceived* citizenship status, as the proposed bill does, as that is more likely to be the basis of most anti-immigrant discrimination. Perceived citizenship status is also closely tied to racial discrimination rather than being based on actual documentation/national origin.

FISCAL IMPACT

The anti-discrimination protections expanded under City Council Bill 26-0144 may result in an influx of complaint correspondence to the Community Relations Commission within the OECR, the City’s anti-discrimination enforcement body. Due to this, the legislation is expected to have a minimal to moderate operational and investigatory impact on the OECR.

AMENDMENT

Any amendments to this bill with respect to BPD should be closely aligned with current policy. Any deviations from policy approved by the consent decree monitoring team could jeopardize compliance with the consent decree. This concern is of great importance and relevance to the work of the Police Accountability Division within the OECR.

CONCLUSION

The OECR discerns no inequity in the bill's intent, purpose, or impact and supports the initiative; however, the office defers to the Law Department's legal concerns and BPD's concerns with respect to the consent decree. As such, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights respectfully request a **favorable report** on City Council Bill 26-0144, **provided for the adoption of the Law Department's amendments and any amendments necessary regarding BPD, so long as they don't jeopardize compliance with the consent decree.**



Amber Greene
Respectfully Submitted, Director, Office

of Equity & Civil Rights