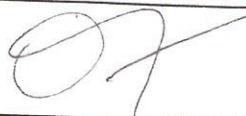|			
Name & Title	Olivia D. Farrow, Esq., RS Interim Commissioner of Health	**Health Department**	
Agency Name & Address	Baltimore City Health Department 1001 E. Fayette St.	**MEMO**	
Subject	Council Bill 10-0475- Bed Capacity Fee		

To: President and Members
          of The City Council
          c/o 409 City Hall

April 12, 2010

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to City Council Bill 10-0475, Bed Capacity Fee. This bill would impose a fee on the overnight bed capacity of institutions not subject to property taxation, in order to increase the City's revenue. Under the terms of this bill, the bed capacity unit would be defined as an overnight accommodation made available to a student by a private, post-secondary educational institution or licensed hospital beds in facilities not currently subject to City property taxes. All institutions that are currently exempt from state property tax would be subject to a fee of $350 per year, per bed capacity unit.

BCHD's primary mission is to promote a healthy Baltimore City by advocating, leading, and providing services of the highest quality in order to promote and protect the health of the residents of Baltimore. In the current economic downturn, funding for public health services has decreased. The continued loss of city, state, federal, and private institution dollars will potentially impact the agency's ability to serve its public health function. This fee would increase City revenues, at a time when the city is facing a budget deficit that requires significant cuts in funding for a variety of core City services. Therefore, any increased funding measures are supported, and we encourage passage of this bill.

BHCD encourages passage of Council Bill 10-0475, and will be participating in the hearing process to provide any public health data that might be necessary in making an informed decision.

CC: Angela Gibson, Office of the Mayor
          Christopher Thomascutty, Deputy Mayor
          Rachel Indek, Legislative Director, Department of Health

1