
CITY OF BALTIMORE

Brandon M. Scott – Mayor
Zeke Cohen – Council President



Office of Council Services

Nancy Mead – Director
100 Holliday Street, Room 415
Baltimore, MD 21202

EDUCATION, YOUTH, & OLDER ADULTS COMMITTEE

The Honorable John Bullock
CHAIR

HEARING NOTES

25-0027R

Informational Hearing - Home Repair Assistance for Older Adults

Hearing Date: 5/7/2026

Hearing Start Time: 12:45 PM

Hearing End Time: 1:46 PM

Location: Du Burns Council Chamber / Webex

Total Estimated Attendance: around 15 people

Committee Members in Attendance:

- **Chair** John Bullock
 - **Vice Chair** Mark Parker
 - Zac Blanchard
 - Jermaine Jones
 - Odette Ramos
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MAJOR SPEAKERS

(This is NOT an attendance record.)

- **Nicole Hart, Department of Housing and Community Development**
 - **Lauren Amirolla, HUBS**
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NOTES

- Chair Bullock introduced the hearing on Bill 25-0027R, Informational Hearing – Home Repair Assistance for Older Adults.
- Councilwoman Ramos gave remarks stating that the bill was heard approximately six months ago and that the purpose of the hearing was to receive an update. She noted that one of the major concerns raised previously was the tremendous backlog, and that the goal of the hearing was to evaluate how the backlog had been reduced. She emphasized the importance of allowing older adults to age with dignity.
- Councilwoman Ramos stated that progress has been made.
- Nicole Hart, Deputy Commissioner for DHCD, gave a presentation. The presentation included:
 - Updates to LIGHT referrals
 - A pilot program with the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success
 - HUBS partnership updates
- DHCD reported:

- 632 clients had been referred to HUBS as of Monday
 - 60 older adults remained on the ORS waitlist as of May 1
- Chair Bullock referenced the waitlist “scrub” process and asked why the LIGHT waitlist is not open to the general public.
 - Response: Approximately 1,600 individuals on the waitlist are age 65 or older. DHCD updated its database system to prioritize applicants by block and better manage cases collectively
- Chair Bullock asked when DHCD anticipates reopening the waitlist to the general public.
 - Response: HUBS is currently closed to the general public and referrals are only being accepted through DHCD
- Councilwoman Ramos asked about the data scrubbing process and duplicate applications.
 - Response: Staff reviewed the waitlist in detail and identified and removed duplicate entries during the scrubbing process
- Councilman Blanchard asked: Whether DHCD had comparative referral data from previous years and about the Director of Community Engagement position
 - Response: The position had previously been frozen but will now work alongside the Assistant Commissioner. Responsibilities include:
 - Day-to-day program management
 - Case management oversight
 - Funding assignments
 - Operational assistance
 - Compliance
 - The role prioritizes program administration and experience in home repair programs
- Vice Chair Parker asked about tax sale prevention efforts and coordination for residents at risk of tax sale due to citations or housing-related issues.
 - Response:
 - The tax sale department works closely with the assessment department to cross-reference cases
 - Social service coordinators are trained on available services and programs
 - Cases involving fines or citations are referred to DHCD early
 - DHCD coordinates with attorneys when cases proceed to court so participation in the LIGHT program can be communicated
- Councilwoman Ramos followed up by asking whether a more systemic approach to tax sale prevention was being considered.
- Chair Bullock asked HUBS representatives to provide additional information.
- Lauren Amirolla, Administrator of the HUBS Center, stated:
 - HUBS received 632 referrals
 - HUBS is actively assisting more than 100 individuals
 - 197 individuals had been contacted
 - 84 individuals still needed to be contacted
 - HUBS could take an additional 189 cases through July 1
 - HUBS anticipates capacity for an additional 840 cases next fiscal year
 - HUBS currently employs seven case managers
 - Additional funding would allow expansion of services
- Lauren Amirolla stated:
 - HUBS’ waitlist exceeded 700 individuals in October

- The waitlist has since been scrubbed
 - HUBS is now only accepting referrals directly from DHCD
- Vice Chair Parker asked about HUBS’ operational capacity and whether staffing and funding limitations affect case management.
 - Response:
 - Operational funding currently supports approximately 450 cases
 - Additional capital funding is used to expand services
 - HUBS transitioned to a cohort-based intake model after consulting with the NYU Housing Lab and other jurisdictions
 - Intake closes once capacity is reached
 - If intake reopens, it would likely occur quarterly
- Vice Chair Parker asked about anticipated funding levels per case.
 - Response:
 - The average cost per case ranges from \$10,000 to \$15,000
- Vice Chair Parker asked about HUBS’ funding sources.
 - Response:
 - Weinberg Foundation
 - ARPA funding
 - Affordable housing funding
 - Operational support from the Stulman and Hackerman Foundations
- Councilman Blanchard asked about the transition from ARPA funding to affordable housing funding.
 - Response:
 - The transition should be seamless
 - There are not expected to be significant differences between funding structures
 - Up to 10% of affordable housing funding may be used operationally to support HUBS case managers
 - Monthly reports will be provided
- Councilman Blanchard followed up by asking whether the total funding amount would remain the same.
 - Response:
 - The ARPA grant covered a two- to three-year period
 - Affordable housing funding operates on a shorter timeline
 - Total funding is approximately \$1 million
- Councilman Blanchard committee request:
 - The precise annual fiscal impact of city funding
 - Details on differences between affordable housing funding and ARPA funding
 - The types and number of grants received
 - The number of cases completed using ARPA funding
 - The amount of ARPA dollars expended
- Representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Older Adults stated:
 - There has been a reduction in calls from residents requesting status updates
 - Communication improvements contributed to the reduction in calls
- Councilman Jones asked about outreach and advertising efforts, expressing concern that some residents most in need may not be aware of available services.
 - Response:

- Outreach efforts include mailers, postcards, door knocking, and participation in senior falls prevention events beginning May 16
 - DHCD is cross-referencing senior falls program participants with the waitlist
 - Planned outreach efforts for FY27 include billboard and bus advertisements
 - Informational sessions are being held at senior centers
 - Staff are available at community events to assist residents with applications
 - DHCD is coordinating with the LEAD program to ensure older adults receive all available services
 - Summer is typically the busiest season for outreach events
- DHCD stated that the department is onboarding three to four additional customer service staff members.
- Councilwoman Ramos asked about contractor payment timelines and whether the payment process had improved.
 - Response:
 - Contractor payment approvals are now processed directly through the Neighborly system
 - Draws are attached directly to properties to improve turnaround times
 - Contractors may proactively submit payment requests
 - Jobs must be fully closed out before payment is finalized
- Councilwoman Ramos followed up by asking whether homeowners are still permitted to select their own contractors.
 - Response:
 - Homeowners may still choose their own contractors
 - Contractors must possess all required certifications
 - DHCD may recommend contractors if needed
- Councilwoman Ramos clarified whether HUBS would continue receiving referrals exclusively through the LIGHT program.
 - Response:
 - Referrals will continue to come exclusively through the LIGHT program for the foreseeable future
- Chair Bullock thanked all participants for the work completed since the October hearing.

FURTHER STUDY REQUESTED

Date	Request	From	Agency
5/7/2026	Request for the precise annual fiscal impact of city funding, details regarding the differences between affordable housing funding and ARPA funding, the types and number of grants received, the number of cases completed using ARPA funding, and the total amount of ARPA dollars expended.	Blanchard	DHCD and HUBS

Hearing Packet in bill file? ----- YES NO N/A
Attendance Sheet in bill file?----- YES NO N/A
Agency reports read? ----- YES NO N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded? ----- YES NO N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the bill file? ----- YES NO N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners in bill file? ----- YES NO N/A

Notes by: Juliane Jemmott
Notes Date: 5/8/2026

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