

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Mr. William M. Johnson, Director
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation-Planning 417 E Fayette Street, 5 th Floor
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill #15-0504 Collection of Taxes, Fees, etc. - Warning of Lien and Potential Foreclosure

CITY OF
BALTIMORE

MEMO



TO

DATE:

July 9, 2015

The Honorable President and Members of the City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary
City Hall, Room 400

I am herein reporting on behalf of the Department of Transportation (DOT) on City Council Bill #15-0504 / Collection of Taxes, Fees, etc. / Warning of Lien and Potential Foreclosure, which would require certain City bills, invoices, and other statements to contain a warning of the potential consequences of a failure to pay.

The City of Baltimore may impose a lien on a property for unpaid taxes and municipal charges, pursuant to Article II, General Powers, of the Baltimore City Charter. Sidewalk and alleyway improvements are one example of a municipal charge issued by DOT that may result in a lien, should the charges remain unpaid by a resident.

City Council Bill 15-0504 would require every bill, invoice, or other statement that could constitute a lien on a real property include a warning that failure to pay could result in a lien against the property and lead to foreclosure and sale of the property. We understand the desire to ensure that every City resident is fully aware of the potential loss of property by failing to pay these taxes and fees and we want to be supportive of these efforts.


However, given the changes that may be necessary for DOT and other agency-issued bills, invoices and statements, we would encourage the City Council to consider an amendment that would provide for additional time following the passage of this legislation before its requirements are to take effect. Considering the time that could be associated with design, ordering, printing, and shipping for myriad bills, invoices, and statements, a more delayed effective date could be of great value to DOT and other City departments.

We also recognize that the Department of Law has reviewed this legislation and recommends an amendment to correct the wording to the warning statement so that it more accurately reflects the lien process. We support these amendments.

Assuming the considerations about additional implementation time and proper wording are addressed by the City Council, DOT has no objections to City Council Bill #15-0504.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,


William M. Johnson
Director

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