

CITY OF BALTIMORE

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW

GEORGE A. NILSON, City Solicitor  
101 City Hall  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

May 15, 2015

Honorable President and Members  
of the City Council of Baltimore  
Room 409, City Hall  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Attn: Karen Randle Executive Secretary

Re: City Council Bill No. 15-0501 – Public Ethics Law – Financial  
Disclosure Interests - Closing Gaps

Dear President and City Council Members:

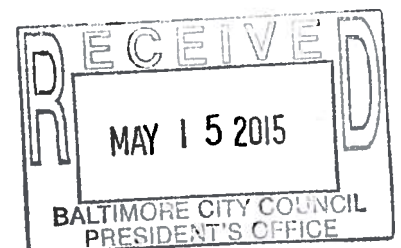
You have requested the advice of the Law Department regarding City Council Bill 15-0501. City Council Bill 501 amends the City's Ethics Code to repeal an inapposite and effectively meaning less exception for the local disclosure requirements for persons who submit copies of State disclosure statements.

The Maryland State Ethics Law requires that ethics codes adopted by local subdivisions be similar to the State law with respect to conflicts of interest, financial disclosure and lobbying. See Md. Ann. Code, General Provisions Art., Sections 5-808, 5-809 and 5-810. Furthermore, provisions applicable to local elected officials must be equivalent to or exceed the requirements of the State law. Id. The local ethics laws, however, can "be modified to the extent necessary to make the provisions relevant to the prevention of financial disclosure statements in that jurisdiction." See Sec. 5-809. City Council Bill 15-0501 is consistent with this requirement.

Accordingly, the Law Department approves City Council Bill 15-0501 for form and legal sufficiency.

Sincerely yours,

Elena R. DiPietro  
Chief Solicitor



cc: George A. Nilson, City Solicitor  
Angela Gibson, City Council Liaison, Mayor's Office  
Hilary Ruley  
Victor Tervalo  
Jennifer Landis