



SHEILA DIXON
Mayor

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



FREDERICK H. BEALEFELD, III
Police Commissioner

June 2, 2008

The President and Honorable Members Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland

Re: 08-0120 Supplemental General Fund Operating Appropriation

Dear President Rawlings-Blake and Members:

The Police Department supports ordinance 08-0120 for \$14,609,694. This funding is due to overtime spending to assertively and comprehensively provide for improved public safety for Baltimore's citizens.

While much of the country experienced an increase in crime in 2007, Baltimore was able to reduce its violent crime by 5%. Moreover, as of May 27, 2008 homicides are down 34% and shootings are down 31%. It should be noted that the department's overtime spending is also down 5.1 million dollars compared to the same period last year. This is due in large part to the new budget stat process the department initiated this fiscal year.

The primary non-anticipated expense for the police department that has resulted in the need for supplementary appropriations is overtime. Overtime is not always budgeted to the maximum level because there is generally built-in savings from funded vacant positions that help offset overtime expenses that exceed the budgeted amount. When applied to special crime initiatives, overtime can often be more cost effective than hiring additional officers because it can be short-term in nature. In an agency such as the police department that must respond to crime patterns quickly and decisively, this is a critical tool. It should be remembered that overtime when used strategically and monitored closely, could help an agency to accomplish its mission in the most cost effective manner. It allows commanders a level of flexibility that is not always available with a built-in permanent shift. The police department constantly tracks overtime expenditures. Every pay period commanders are provided with reports that list every member of their command that has earned overtime. Commanders are responsible for justifying all expenditures.

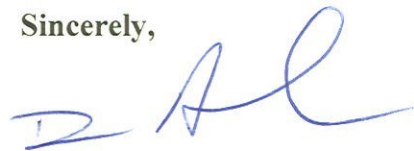


Attrition

The number of sworn vacancies in the department has also contributed to the overtime deficit in fiscal year 2008. During the calendar year 2007, the Police Department recorded 273 sworn separations from the agency while hiring 266 new recruits. However, for 2008 through April the department has hired 99 officers and 75 have left the agency.

The Police Department greatly appreciates your support and that of your committee members.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. Owens
Deputy Police Commissioner