



STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE

MAYOR

*100 Holliday Street, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202*

TO: The Honorable Bernard. C. “Jack” Young
and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400 City Hall,
100. N. Holiday Street
Attn: Karen Randle

FROM: Sheryl Goldstein, Director, Mayor’s Office on Criminal Justice

DATE: November 12, 2010

RE: City Council Bill No. 10-0616

City Council Bill No.: **10-0616 – Prohibited Distribution of K2 or “Spice”**

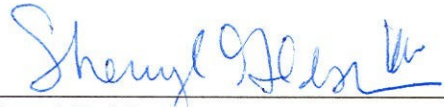
The Mayor’s Office on Criminal Justice (MOCJ) has reviewed this legislation which prohibits the possession and distribution of “Spice,” a brand name for a dried herbal blend that can be smoked and contains synthetic chemicals, known as JWH-018 and JWH-073 that mimic tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) by acting on the cannabinoid receptors in the brain. The Drug Enforcement Agency has identified both JWH-018 and JWH-073 as “drugs and chemicals of concern” in 2009 though they are still under review and have not been scheduled as controlled substances.

Because both the vegetable material on which the synthetic chemicals are sprayed and the chemicals themselves are sold as an incense blend and not for human consumption, they are unregulated. As a result, the reported health effects of the substances vary widely and include severe effects such as hallucinations and seizures. There is clearly cause for concern about the inhalation of such substances, particularly among youth.



Baltimore County passed similar legislation last month that will take effect November 19, 2010. Many states have also taken action to ban these substances over the past year but is too early to determine the effects the legislation will have.

MOCJ supports this legislation.



Sheryl Goldstein
Director
Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice