

F R O M	NAME & TITLE	William M. Johnson, Director	CITY of  BALTIMORE   M E M O	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation 417 East Fayette Street, Room 527		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 13-0262		

TO

The Honorable President and Members  
of the City Council  
c/o Karen Randle  
Room 400 City Hall

October 24, 2013

I am herein reporting on City Council Bill #13-0262, Special Traffic Enforcement Officers – Citywide Jurisdiction, which allows Special Traffic Enforcement Officers (STEOs) authority citywide and grants the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Department of General Services (DGS) authority to recommend appointment of STEOs by the Police Commissioner.

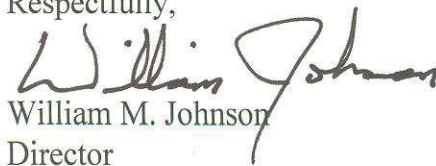
STEOs are established under the Code of Public Local Laws of Baltimore City, § 16-16C, to authorize City employees commissioned by the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) to control and direct pedestrian and vehicular traffic under the Maryland Vehicle Law and Baltimore City ordinances regulating motor vehicles as a police officer. STEOs are authorized to operate during regular high traffic periods, as necessitated by emergency situation or incident, and in connection with special events. However, STEOs are explicitly prohibited under PLL § 16-16C from issuing citations for moving violations other than for failure to obey a lawful traffic direction or traffic control device. They are also prohibited from making arrests. Subtitle 72 of Article 19 of the Baltimore City Code, proposed for amendment by this bill, also enables use of STEOs, but currently limits their employment to the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Department of Recreation and Parks (Rec & Parks), and limits their jurisdiction to the Downtown Management District and property controlled by Rec & Parks.

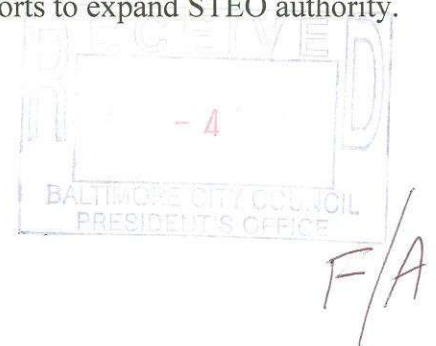
DOT supports this bill with amendments. DOT appreciates the sponsors' intent to authorize STEO deployment to special events throughout the City, and strongly supports this aspect of the bill. DOT also appreciates the clarification that I may recommend certain employees for BPD commissioning as STEOs, which the DOT Director has been doing since DOT separated from DPW under our Charter and DPW's roles and responsibilities under the Baltimore City Code concerning traffic were assigned to DOT.

DOT respectfully requests that this bill be amended to strike page 1, line 21, and page 2, line 2, thereby removing the Directors of DPW and DGS from those directors authorized to recommend STEOs for commissioning. As the sole department currently responsible for managing STEOs, and all aspects of traffic management, DOT encourages this Council and Committee to consider leaving these employees under DOT's jurisdiction, to avoid the potential bifurcation or fragmentation of STEO management and subsequent resulting inefficiencies. As mentioned in the bill reports provided by the Directors of DPW and DGS, these departments do not employ STEOs and have no intention of doing so, and therefore, do not need authorization to recommend individuals for STEO commissioning. Of course, DOT has every intention to continue cooperating with its sister agencies, particularly DGS, in managing traffic for special events and emergencies.

I appreciate this opportunity to comment and thank the sponsors for their efforts to expand STEO authority.

Respectfully,

  
William M. Johnson  
Director



WMJ/BZ