



F R O M	Name & Title	Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D. Commissioner 	Health Department  MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 210 Guilford Ave.		
	Subject	Council Bill 08-0214 – Illegal Dumping – Penalties - Enforcement		

To: President and Members  
of the City Council  
c/o  
409 City Hall

November 6, 2008

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) supports Council Bill 08-0214 with amendments. The purpose of the Bill to enhance the provisions governing waste disposal and authorizing the Health Commissioner to abate violations and collect the costs, expenses and penalties for non-compliance.

Illegal dumping in Baltimore City is an ongoing environmental and public health issue. Not only does discarded waste material pollute the land and throughways, but it also attracts and fosters rodents and other pests. As most are aware, rodents and pests threaten public health. They decrease the quality of life, carry diseases and exasperate symptoms for those with compromised respiratory systems.

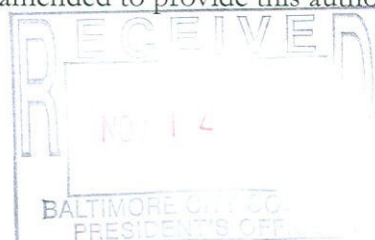
Due to the amount of illegal dumping that occurs, extensive surveillance and investigation by the City is required. These activities are presently being performed by the Environmental Crimes Unit under the Department of Public Works (DPW). In addition, there is a current collaboration between DPW and the Department of Housing and Community Development to ensure the abatement of properties by placing liens on properties in violation.

As the bill currently reads, the Division of Environmental Health, which is the division that handles environmental public health issues, would be responsible for implementing this bill. The Division's manpower resources, unfortunately, would be incapable of abating illegal dumping violations. Furthermore, additional fiscal resources would be required in the hiring of personnel and equipment to abate such violations.

While BCHD supports efforts to increase penalties for illegal dumping and expand enforcement action, we believe that DPW is the proper department to oversee the implementation of this bill. DPW already has the tools necessary to abate such violations and is currently involved in similar activities. With their trained manpower and existing equipment, we believe that DPW would be the reasonable fit for a successful implementation of this bill.

For these reasons, BCHD does not support requiring the Health Commissioner to abate these violations. Rather, we recommend that this bill be amended to provide this authority to DPW.

Cc: Angela Gibson



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