


F R O M	Name & Title	Dr. Leana Wen	Health Department MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201		
	Subject	CB 16-0621 – Transport of Crude Oil by Rail		

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

October 19, 2016

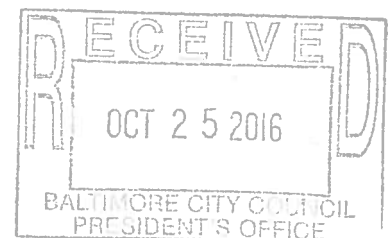
The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review Council Bill 16-0621, which requires the City to conduct a health impact assessment and risk assessment of the transport of crude oil by rail; update, periodically study, and report on the City's incident response plans as they relate to the transport of crude oil by rail; create a mechanism to ensure proper clean up and effective response to derailments or other adverse impacts; and certain public outreach programs. Specifically, this ordinance requires that BCHD conduct a health impact assessment (HIA), and—in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management—a risk assessment of the transportation of crude oil by rail in or through Baltimore City, or within 10 miles of the City's boundaries.

HIAs utilize scientific data, public health expertise, and stakeholder input to identify the potential health effects of a new proposal and to help craft policy recommendations that minimize risks and capitalize on opportunities to improve health. Adopting a health-in-all-policies approach and ensuring community input into decisions that impact the health of our City is always a top priority for BCHD. To this end, we support the analysis of a potential crude oil transport plan through the lens of health effects for Baltimore city residents, in order to ensure that all potential health risks are taken into account before moving forward with implementation.

However, the efforts required under this bill also require significant resources. Based on knowledge of previous health impact assessments conducted both in Baltimore City as well as in other cities, as well as their associated process and cost, conducting a comprehensive health impact assessment with appropriate levels of community engagement, data analysis, and surveying could cost as much as \$270,000¹ and take up to a year². **The health department has no specific funds nor staff time currently allocated towards such an expense and would require additional financial support in order to meet the requirements of this ordinance.**

¹ http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail/safety/report/full_final_CBR_Biofuels.pdf
² <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/~media/assets/external-sites/health-impact-project/healthimpactassessmentbringingpublichealthdatatodecisionmaking.pdf>

UF



BCHD does not currently employ staff dedicated to the completion of health impact assessments; nor are health impact assessments an explicit component of existing staff responsibilities. Typical components of a health impact assessment budget include: project management staff to ensure the successful completion of the assessment, which contains structured analysis components to be conducted at the community and city-level; funds to support convening and stakeholder focus groups; support for data collection and analysis; as well as ongoing performance management and reporting. To ensure a high-quality report, BCHE would likely need to contract with an external consultant.

With respect to the risk assessment, information from our colleagues at the Department of Planning indicate that Baltimore City has done a risk assessment and vulnerability assessment related to natural hazards and climate change; however, no specific risk assessment associated with crude oil has been conducted – which would also lend itself to beginning the process anew.

cc: Angela Gibson, Office of the Mayor
Sonia Sarkar, Chief Policy and Engagement Officer, Department of Health



Leana S. Wen, MD MSc
Commissioner of Health
Baltimore City