



HEARING NOTES

Bill: 21-0021

Late Fees for Past Due Rent

Committee: Economic and Community Development

Chaired By: Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton

Hearing Date: February 9, 2021

Time (Beginning): 2:25 PM

Time (Ending): 3:05 PM

Location: Virtual WEBEX

Total Attendance: 107

Committee Members in Attendance:

John Bullock Mark Conway Ryan Dorsey Antonio Glover Robert Stokes Odette Ramos

Form with checkboxes for: Bill Synopsis in the file?, Attendance sheet in the file?, Agency reports read?, Video or audio-digitally recorded?, Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?, Evidence of notification to property owners?, Final vote taken at this hearing?, Motioned by, Seconded by, Final Vote.

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Mr. Victor Tervalá, Department of Law
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, Department of Housing and Community Development

- Mr. Bill Wells, Housing Authority of Baltimore City
 - Mr. Walter Horton, Department of Real Estate
 - Mr. Matt Hill, Public Justice Center
 - Ms. Tisha Guthrie
 - Mr. Joe Magar, Jews United for Justice
 - Ms. Katherine Howard, Regional Management; Maryland Multi-Housing Association
 - Mr. Ari Plaut, Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors
 - Ms. Lisa O'Reilly
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Major Issues Discussed

1. Councilwoman Middleton opened the meeting, introduced committee members and City representative. She read the bill into the record.
 2. Councilman Robert Stokes, the sponsor, explained the purpose of the bill.
 3. Agency representatives provided testimony about their agency's report.
 4. Mr. Victor Tervalá provided the Law Department's report. He explained that a section (page 2, paragraph 5) of the bill conflicts with state law found in Public Local Laws and should be stricken from the bill. If the language is stricken from the bill, then the Law Department can support the bill for form and legal sufficiency.
 5. Mr. Bill Wells testified on behalf of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City. He explained that the bill conflicted with certain HABC regulations and HUD guidelines and therefore requested that the bill be amended.
 6. Public testimony was taken.
 7. Mr. Matt Hill, Ms. Tisha Guthrie, Ms. Lisa O'Reilly and Mr. Joe Magar spoke about the impact late fees would have on poor families in Baltimore. Ms. Katherine Howard spoke about the impact non-collection of late fees would have on management companies and owners. She also suggested amending the bill. Mr. Ari Plaut spoke on behalf of the Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors opposition to the bill. GBBR is concerned about the impact the bill will have on landlords.
 8. The committee discussed the bill. Councilmember Dorsey asked whether late fees incurred throughout the pandemic emergency can be demanded for payment. He also indicated that after reading City Council Bill 20-0526, it is his understanding that late fees cannot be collected during a state of emergency in Baltimore City. He also spoke about postmarks and the timeliness of mail.
 9. The hearing was recessed.
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Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes **No**

If yes, describe. The committee will conduct a worksession on the bill.

Committee Vote:

Sharon Green Middleton, Chair
John Bullock:
Mark Conway:
Ryan Dorsey:
Antonio Glover:
Robert Stokes:
Odette Ramos:

Jennifer L. Coates, Committee Staff

Date: February 16, 2021

cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File