


Robert Cennamo

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Robert Cennamo, Budget Director	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Finance Room 432, City Hall		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 21-0075 – Study and Report-Sewage Backup Expedited Reimbursement and Direct Assistance Program		

TO

DATE:

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400

June 14, 2021

Position: Does Not Oppose

The Department of Finance is herein reporting on City Council Bill 21-0075, Study and Report-Sewage Backup Expedited Reimbursement and Direct Assistance Program, the purpose of which is to require the Department of Public Works to submit a report on the feasibility of implementing an expedited reimbursement and direct assistance program for any sewage backup as a result of both wet and dry weather events and conditions in both public and private systems.

Background

The Department of Public Works (DPW) currently offers two expedited reimbursement and direct assistance programs. As part of the 2017 Modified Consent Decree, DPW administers the Expedited Reimbursement Program for sewage backups caused by wet weather. The program offers up to \$5,000 per residence, per event for reasonable, documented clean-up, disinfection, and disposal costs. In addition, DPW launched the Sewage Onsite Support (SOS) program in Fiscal 2021, which is a pilot program to provide cleaning and disinfection services by a third-party vendor at no costs to homeowners or tenants impacted by sewage damage caused by wet weather capacity-related events.

This legislation aims to study the costs of feasibility of expanding these two programs to cover both wet and dry weather events, as well as conditions in the public and private systems. In addition, the report will include an analysis of litigation costs related to these events over the past ten years.

Fiscal Impact

The Department of Finance does not anticipate additional fiscal impact to the City.

Other Considerations

The Department of Finance supports the intent of this legislation to better understand the feasibility of implementing an expedited reimbursement and direct assistance program to alleviate the financial burden placed on residents. However, Finance defers to DPW on these programs, which are run exclusively by the agency and funded by utility funds.

Conclusion

This legislation requires the Department of Public Works to submit a report on the feasibility of implementing an expedited reimbursement and direct assistance program for any sewage backup. Finance does not anticipate a cost to the City for the implementation of this legislation.

For the reasons stated above, the Department of Finance does not oppose City Council Bill 21-0075.

cc: Henry Raymond
Natasha Mehu
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