

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, President

BALTIMORE



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

100 North Holliday St. • Room 400 • Baltimore, MD • 21202 • 410-396-4804

Contact: Ryan O'Doherty
Director of Communications
410-396-5538 (office)
410-818-4269 (cell)
ryan.odoherty@baltimorecity.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Monday, June 16, 2008

CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT CREATES NEW SPECIAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

BALTIMORE—City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced today the creation of a new Special Committee on Property Tax Relief to examine long-term solutions to Baltimore's burdensome property tax rate, which has long been the highest in Maryland and is more than twice as high as the rates in neighboring jurisdictions.

"While we have been able to provide more than \$32 million in relief over the past three years, Baltimore's property tax rate continues to be a long-term problem that deserves a comprehensive long-term solution," said Rawlings-Blake. "This new Special Committee will lead our efforts in Baltimore to address this complex issue and turn thoughtful ideas and recommendations into concrete legislation."

"Broad-based cuts to critical city services that impact the quality-of-life of our citizens are not the answer," said Rawlings-Blake. "We need to look at innovative solutions that include new revenue as well as greater efficiencies in City government in order to have a lasting impact on this critical issue to attract and retain families and strengthen our neighborhoods in Baltimore."

The new Special Committee, chaired by Councilman William H. Cole IV (District-11), will begin to carefully consider some of the recommendations outlined in the report of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Property Tax Relief, as well as other measures. Council Budget Chair, Bernard C. "Jack" Young (District-12), and Councilwoman Helen Holton (District-8), Chair of the Taxation and Finance Committee and a member of the Blue Ribbon commission, will also sit on the special committee.

"I'm honored that the Council President has asked me to Chair this special committee," said Councilman Cole. "This is not something that can be solved overnight, but, I'm confident that by working together, with the Mayor, we can find ways to provide property tax relief to families in the City of Baltimore."

Over the past three years, the Mayor and the Council have cut the property tax rate in Baltimore City by 6 cents per \$100 in value, providing more than \$32 million in relief, and \$18 million more in relief for the next fiscal year. However, Baltimore City's property tax rate is still more than twice that of Baltimore County's rate and remains the highest in the State of Maryland.

"We have not yet come close to unlocking our potential as a great American city," said Rawlings-Blake. "In order to do so, we must work to make Baltimore a more attractive place for families to live—and thrive by improving public safety and public schools and by reducing our property tax rate."

#

Please visit our website at www.baltimorecitycouncil.com