

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, President

BALTIMORE



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CITY COUNCIL PASSES NEW PROPERTY CRIME LEGISLATION

Electronic Reporting from Pawn and Second-hand Shops will Help Police to Recover Stolen Property and Locate Criminal Suspects

BALTIMORE—Last night, the Baltimore City Council passed significant legislation to address property crime in the Baltimore region. The measure, sponsored by City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, requires pawnshops and secondhand dealers to report transactions electronically to the Baltimore City Police Department.

"Improving public safety is a top priority and the City Council is committed to finding innovative ways to reduce crime in Baltimore," Rawlings-Blake said. "This new ordinance will help our Police detectives solve property crimes and make our neighborhoods safer and stronger."

Similar efforts in the Washington, DC metropolitan area have helped police recover millions of dollars in stolen property and arrest criminal suspects. The transaction data collected from pawnshops and secondhand dealers will be integrated into a regional database shared by Police Departments in jurisdictions in the Baltimore and Washington regions. Baltimore's new ordinance also requires merchants to submit electronic photos of property when placed on hold by Police Detectives.

During the last legislative session in Annapolis, local jurisdictions tried unsuccessfully to get similar legislation passed. Immediately after the state effort failed, Council President Rawlings-Blake introduced stronger local legislation to the City Council.

"It is my sincere hope that this bill will become a model for statewide legislation for next session," Rawlings-Blake said. "It is critical that law enforcement in every jurisdiction have immediate, electronic access to pawn and second hand transaction data so that police can investigate property crimes more effectively."

The Baltimore City Ordinance, which was endorsed by the Police Department, is expected to be signed by Mayor Sheila Dixon and will go in effect 30 days thereafter.

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