

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

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE INTRODUCES LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE FOR 'STRONGER NEIGHBORHOODS'

Measures Focus on Illegal Dumping, Liquor Zoning Enforcement and Rat Control; Illegal Dumping Law Would Create Potential Cash Rewards for Citizens

BALTIMORE—Tonight, Baltimore City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake introduces a series of legislative measures to improve quality of life in Baltimore's neighborhoods. The package of legislation seeks to address the chronic challenges of illegal dumping, liquor store zoning, and rat infestation. "Neighborhoods have always been the heart and soul of our city and when our neighborhoods thrive, Baltimore thrives," Rawlings-Blake said. "We need to do more to address some of the simple quality-of-life issues that our citizens deal with on a day-to-day basis."

Reducing Illegal Dumping:

The primary legislation is a comprehensive overhaul of Baltimore City's illegal dumping ordinance. The legislation provides for stiffer penalties for illegal dumping; creates an illegal dumping hotline with potential cash rewards for citizens who report violations; and forces criminal violators to be subject to community service penalties in addition to fines and jail time. The measure also mandates that all city contracts contain an illegal dumping clause, where, if violated, a contractor doing business with the City will be considered to be in breach of contract. "Illegal dumping is an ongoing challenge in Baltimore. Now is the time for a new, comprehensive overhaul of our strategy to deal with the problem." Rawlings-Blake said.

Prohibiting New Liquor Stores near Schools and Churches:

In Baltimore City, state law prohibits new liquor establishments within 300 feet of a church or a school. The Council President will introduce a resolution that asks the Board of Liquor License Commissioners to report to the City Council on procedures used to enforce the current distance prohibition. The resolution also seeks to examine the feasibility of asking the Baltimore City Delegation to introduce state legislation to increase the distance of the prohibition. For example, in Montgomery County the prohibition is 750 feet.

Improving Rat Control:

Finally, the Council President is introducing a resolution calling for an informational hearing to brief the City Council on the effectiveness of Vector Control Bureau activity in controlling the rat population in City neighborhoods, the success of outreach efforts in enlisting the citizenry in rat eradication efforts and the methods used to measure the efficacy of rat control and abatement efforts.

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