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MAYOR

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**HB 422**

February 27, 2020

**TO:** Members of the House Appropriations Committee

**FROM:** Nicholas Blandy, Deputy Director of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 422 – Opioid Restitution Fund – Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Jackson, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 422.

Since 2015, the number of fentanyl-related deaths in Maryland has increased by 450%, and the number of opioid-related deaths has increased by 100%. The state's opioid epidemic produces four fatal overdoses a day, severely straining the resources of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME). The OCME is an important part of the public health system and is on the front lines of the opioid epidemic in Baltimore.

This bill will help provide OCME with additional resources needed to process overdose deaths, which will give local health departments and the Maryland Department of Health more timely data around types of drug-related deaths.

For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 422.

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