



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

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**HB0029**

February 1, 2024

**TO:** Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 29 – Real Property - Transfer to Heir - Exemption from Prepayment

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports House Bill (HB) 29.

HB 29 allows families to transfer deeds from a deceased homeowner to a family heir without prepaying outstanding property taxes. This would clear an important barrier faced by moderate-to-low-income families who are trying to transfer the family home from one generation to another.

Stabilizing families, homes, and neighborhoods is a critical goal for the Baltimore City Administration. The family home is often the only major asset a working-class Baltimore City family owns. When the homeowner, usually an older adult, dies, the family may face legal and financial impediments to retitling the home – in particular, the requirement that a new deed can only be recorded until outstanding property taxes are paid. This requirement may delay the transfer of the property to a family member, or even render it impossible.

During the 2023 General Assembly Session, the Baltimore City Administration sought to pass similar legislation at a local level in HB865. Unfortunately, we were unable to see that legislation across the finish line but remain heavily dedicated to ensuring that this issue continues to be discussed and, hopefully soon, resolved. HB 29 allows families more time to establish payment plans and access resources to pay outstanding taxes. As a result, the home stays in the family, reducing the risk of homelessness and family destabilization. This is especially important for multigenerational households, which frequently include older adults who need family support.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 29.