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**SB 0026**

March 26, 2025

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

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

**RE:** Senate Bill 26 - Davis Martinez Public Employee Safety and Health Act

**POSITION:** **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 26 **with amendments**.

SB26 introduces significant revisions to the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Act to strengthen protections for public sector employees. The legislation strengthens workplace safety regulations for public employees in Maryland. It establishes a Public Employees' Safety and Health Unit within the Division of Labor and Industry, mandates self-inspections for public workplaces, imposes stricter penalties for violations, and requires public entities to distribute safety reports and citations to employees. The bill also removes exemptions on penalties for public bodies and introduces criminal liability for certain public officials. Additionally, revenue from fines would be allocated to an apprenticeship and training program rather than directly supporting workplace safety initiatives.

SB26 is an important step forward in ensuring workplace safety for public employees, providing updated standards to enhance safety protocols, thus resulting in reduced risks for employees. **To further the safety of public employees, SB26 should mirror the stance of HB176 which will provide the same level of oversight but addresses key concerns with penalty amounts, self-inspection requirements, and the usage of fines for health and safety specifically.** The city remains committed to promoting employee safety and has made significant progress in fostering safer and healthier workplaces. Many agencies have been working to build the necessary capacity and culture to reduce workplace injuries, illnesses, and incidents of violence.

The BCA would like to recommend that penalty revenues should be directed towards health and safety measures which would ensure that collected fines are utilized effectively. Specifically, these funds could support a no-fee MOSH training program for the public sector, allowing the commissioner to allocate a portion of any fine towards abatement activities. This adjustment would strengthen the bill's effectiveness while supporting long-term workplace safety enhancements.

The BCA respectfully **supports** SB 26 **if amended to mirror the House cross-file (HB176)** as these changes will help public agencies meet compliance requirements while prioritizing long-term workplace safety.