

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 301 (Delegate Hammen, *et al.*)

Judiciary

Referred to Judicial Proceedings

Baltimore City - Civil Violations - Citation

This amended bill authorizes special enforcement officers in Baltimore City to issue civil citations to enforce any specified codes that, by ordinance, are subject to civil penalties or equitable remedies. If approved by the Chief Judge of the District Court, the form of the citation may contain the summons. If a citation is issued for a violation arising from a condition of real property, the citation may include a count demanding judgement for outstanding municipal liens against the property if the property is a vacant lot or a structure that is vacant or unfit for habitation. If a defendant fails to pay a fine and fails to appear in District Court: (1) the city may double the fine (not exceeding \$1,000); and (2) the court may enter judgement against the defendant in the amount of the fine due, enter an order granting equitable relief from the violation, or enter judgement for the city in the amount of the outstanding municipal liens against the property. The bill also authorizes the State's Attorney, the City Solicitor, or any attorney designated by the city to represent the city in enforcing a civil citation.

Between July 1, 1997 and October 1, 1997, all citations issued must be served with a notice of the bill's provisions and reference to the appropriate section(s) of the State law. The bill is effective July 1, 1997.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal general fund expenditure increase as discussed below. It is assumed that any fines collected by the District Court would revert to Baltimore City. As a result, general fund revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: Potential minimal revenue increase in Baltimore City due to the civil monetary penalties. If more judgements are entered in favor of the city, revenues could increase due to the collection of municipal property liens. Baltimore City could issue and enforce civil citations with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None. Small businesses that adhere to Baltimore City's ordinances would not be directly affected.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: Currently, the District Court designs and distributes infraction citations to the municipalities. Under the bill, the court would develop a new citation for Baltimore City. As a result, general fund expenditures could increase due to development and printing costs. Although such costs would depend upon the number of citations printed, it is assumed the costs would be minimal.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (District Court), Baltimore City, Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 4, 1997
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