

HB1560/340910/1

BY: Environment and Transportation Committee

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1560
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 3, after “Process” insert “, Billing Program Review.”; in line 4, after “of” insert “requiring the Baltimore City Department of Public Works to establish a certain administrative review process for certain customer claims; requiring the Department to designate a third party to review and render a final decision on each claim; authorizing the Department to designate the Environmental Control Board of Baltimore City to serve as the third party; authorizing the filing of a petition for judicial review under certain circumstances; requiring the Department to publish certain information regarding the administrative review process on the Department’s website in a certain manner; requiring the Department to periodically review the Department’s water and sewer billing program; requiring the Department, as a part of the review required under this Act, to establish a certain quality assurance and quality control committee; requiring the quality assurance and quality control committee to make certain recommendations to the Director of the Department or the Director’s designee;” and strike beginning with “establishing” in line 4 down through “determination;” in line 26.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, after line 21, insert:

“(A) IN THIS SECTION, “DEPARTMENT” MEANS THE BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

“(B) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A FORMAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESS BY WHICH A CUSTOMER MAY FILE A CLAIM FOR REVIEW OF THE CUSTOMER’S BILL.

(Over)

(2) (I) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DESIGNATE A THIRD PARTY TO REVIEW AND RENDER A FINAL DECISION ON EACH CLAIM.

(II) THE DEPARTMENT MAY DESIGNATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL BOARD OF BALTIMORE CITY TO SERVE AS THE THIRD PARTY.

(3) WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE A FINAL DECISION IS RENDERED ON A CLAIM BY THE THIRD PARTY DESIGNATED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW MAY BE FILED WITH THE CIRCUIT COURT AS PROVIDED IN TITLE 7, CHAPTER 200 OF THE MARYLAND RULES.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PUBLISH INFORMATION REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESS ON THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE IN A READILY ACCESSIBLE LOCATION.

(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PERIODICALLY REVIEW THE DEPARTMENT'S WATER AND SEWER BILLING PROGRAM, INCLUDING:

(I) THE DEPARTMENT'S BILLING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES;

(II) THE PERFORMANCE OF CUSTOMER SUPPORT AND SERVICES PERSONNEL; AND

(III) QUALITY CONTROL PRACTICES, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT'S REVIEW OF RANDOMLY SELECTED BILLING DISPUTE CASES.

(2) (I) AS A PART OF THE REVIEW CONDUCTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY CONTROL COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD OF WATER METERING AND BILLING SYSTEMS, BILLING ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE.

(II) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY CONTROL COMMITTEE SHALL MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT, OR THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE, FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO PROCESSES, POLICIES, OR CUSTOMER SERVICES THAT COULD ADDRESS RECURRING CUSTOMER CONCERNS OR DISPUTES."

On pages 2 through 5, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 22 on page 2 through line 19 on page 5, inclusive.

AMENDMENT NO. 3

On page 5, in line 32, strike "AND AFFORDABILITY"; and in line 33, strike "VULNERABLE".

On page 6, strike beginning with "HOUSEHOLDS" in line 8 down through "POPULATIONS" in line 10 and substitute "OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS, RENTAL HOUSEHOLDS, AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON HOUSEHOLDS IDENTIFIED AS ELDERLY, LOW-INCOME, OR DISABLED BASED ON THE HOUSEHOLDS' ENROLLMENT IN A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM"; strike beginning with the second "LEAKS" in line 17 down through "HISTORY;" in line 19 and substitute "THE NUMBER OF PROPERTIES THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TESTS FOR LEAKS, THE NUMBER OF PROPERTIES FOUND BY THE DEPARTMENT TO HAVE LEAKS, AND WHETHER THE CITY OR THE PROPERTY OWNER WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR REPAIRING THE LEAKS; AND"; in line 26, after "REPAIRS" insert "THAT ARE TESTED

(Over)

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BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS"; and in line 28, strike the semicolon and substitute a period.

On page 7, strike in their entirety lines 1 through 5, inclusive.