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MAYOR

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HB 187

January 28, 2020

TO: Members of the House Appropriations Committee

FROM: Nicholas Blendy, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 187 – Public Institutions of Higher Education – Outbreak Response Plan

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Jackson, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** the House Bill (HB) 187. HB 187 requires public institutions of higher education to submit an outbreak response plan to the Maryland Department of Health each year, and requires the plan to be implemented under certain circumstances, among other components.

In the past 10 years, the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) has been notified of seven infectious disease outbreaks from public institutions of higher education. These outbreaks have concerned mumps, influenza, and other types of respiratory illness, along with certain foodborne illnesses. According to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 10.06.01, institutions including schools, child care centers, acute and long term care facilities, and even institutions of higher education are mandated to report outbreaks and reportable communicable diseases to their respective local and state public health authorities in Maryland. Drawing from BCHD's experiences with outbreak response and current COMAR mandates, it is clear that in institutions where a large number of people spend time in close proximity, there is great potential for communicable diseases to spread.

Out of consideration for past and future infectious disease outbreaks at institutions of higher education, the BCA supports a mandate requiring said institutions develop an outbreak plan, which would, in turn, help them respond to, investigate, and control outbreaks in tandem with the City and State.

For these reasons, we request a **favorable** report on House Bill 187.

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