



Howard County

M A R Y L A N D

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Administration testimony on Council Bill No. CB 48-2018

To: Lonnie R. Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

From: Robert J. Frances, 
Director, Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits

Date: June 6, 2018

On May 27, 2018, there were extensive rains in Howard County and a severe flood event in historic Ellicott City. In Ellicott City and elsewhere in the County, there has been extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure. By Executive Order 2018-07, continued by Council Resolution No. 84-2018, the County is under a State of Emergency through July 3, 2018.

The damage caused by the rain and flood event will require extensive reconstruction and repair by multiple businesses, residents and property owners. County permits will need to be issued for much of the reconstruction and repair.

The Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits charges fees for functions related to building and reconstruction. Council Resolution 62-2017 adopted rates for Fiscal Year 2018 for functions related to building and construction. Rates adopted by CR 62-2017 are effective through June 30, 2018. The Council recently passed Resolution 57-2018 that sets rates for building and reconstruction for Fiscal Year 2019 and rates adopted by CR 57-2018 are effective on July 1, 2018.

Likewise, the Department of Health charges certain rates for food service facility licenses that it issues. Council Resolution No. 111-2012 last adopted rates for food service facility licenses and temporary food service facility licenses.

The Department of Public Works also charges certain fees related to water and sewer service and to shared sewage disposal facilities. Council Resolution 60-2017 adopted rates for Fiscal Year 2018 for functions related to water and sewer service and to shared sewage disposal facilities. Rates adopted by CR 60 -2017 are effective through June 30, 2018. The Council recently passed Resolution 55-2018 that sets rates related to water and sewer service and to shared sewage disposal facilities for Fiscal Year 2019 and rates adopted by CR 55-2018 are effective on July 1, 2018.

Property owners, residents and businesses affected by the flood are already facing undue hardships and now must perform work on their properties that will require County permits in order to make the properties usable and habitable. The Administration wishes to reduce these related costs in order to ease the financial burden on County property owners, residents and businesses. Likewise, the water and sewer service was shut off to much of Ellicott City and has been since the flood event. Yet, residents and businesses continue to incur water and sewer service charges.

Council Bill No. 48-2018 is an emergency bill that amends fees charged by the County for certain County-issued permits, inspections, services and licenses. The bill will reduce fees charged under the following fee schedules to be \$0 through January 31, 2019:

- Building, Grading & Miscellaneous Construction Permits
- Fire Protection Permits
- Building Permit & miscellaneous Fees
- Fire Protection Permit Fees
- Grading, Drainage, and Erosion Control Permit Fees
- Electrical Fee Schedules
- Electrical Permit Fee Schedule
- Plumbing Fees
- Schedule of Plumbing Permit Fees, and
- Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning, and Refrigeration Permit
- Food Service Facility Licenses
- Temporary Food Service Facility

Related to water and sewer service, this Bill will propose a \$0 rate for charges that were incurred for the time between May 27, 2018 and January 31, 2019. This will apply to properties located within the No Access Area established under Executive Order 2018-08, as amended by Executive Order 2018-10. The specific water and sewer service schedules that are waived are as follows:

- General System Benefit Charge
- In-Aid-Of-Construction Charges
- Charges for Unmetered Water Connections Associated with Private Fire Protection Systems
- Utility Connection Charges
- Design Approval, Construction Inspection, and Annual Operation, Maintenance, Repair and Replacement Fees for Shared Sewage Disposal Facilities
- Annual Operation, Maintenance, Repair and Replacement Fees
- Utility User Charges and Surcharges Industrial Pre-treatment and Sewer Surcharge Rates
- Utility Special Charges

We anticipate minimal fiscal impact to this bill as fees are waived for a short period of time. We will be tracking this as part of our storm response costs for federal reimbursement.