

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 681 (Delegate Lewis, *et al.*) (By Request - Baltimore City Administration)

Government, Labor, and Elections

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**Baltimore City - Ordinance Enforcement - Amount of Fines and Penalties**

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This bill increases, from \$1,000 to \$5,000, the maximum civil and criminal fines and penalties Baltimore City may impose for the violation of any ordinance, rule, or regulation established by the city, as specified.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** Baltimore City revenues may increase, beginning in FY 2027, to the extent that higher fines or penalties are imposed for civil or criminal offenses. Baltimore City expenditures are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Baltimore City is authorized to provide civil and criminal fines and penalties for the violation of any ordinance, rule, or regulation established by the city, as specified. The maximum fine or penalty for these violations is \$1,000.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** In fiscal 2024, the Baltimore City Environmental Control Board (ECB) issued 7,778 environmental citations totaling approximately \$7.8 million, as shown in **Exhibit 1**. Baltimore City collected \$5.9 million in fine revenues from these environmental citations, a 75.8% collection rate. In addition, Baltimore City collected \$1,630 from other civil citations in fiscal 2024.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Fiscal 2024 Baltimore City Environmental Control Board Citations**

<b><u>Citations Issued in FY 2024</u></b>	<b><u>Citations Issued</u></b>	<b><u>Value at \$1,000</u></b>	<b><u>Value at \$5,000</u></b>
Failed to Abate Unsafe Structure	7,579	\$7,579,000	\$37,895,000
Failed to Obtain License to Operate a Rental Dwelling	155	155,000	775,000
Dumping Over 25 lbs. of Waste on Public Property	30	30,000	150,000
Dumping Over 25 lbs. of Waste on Private Property	11	11,000	55,000
Violation of Corrective Actions	1	1,000	5,000
Dog Not on Leash	1	1,000	5,000
Neglect of Animal	1	1,000	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,778</b>	<b>\$7,778,000</b>	<b>\$38,890,000</b>

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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Baltimore City advises that significantly higher fines may initially serve to reduce collection rates. However, any unpaid ECB fines can result in property liens, and the potential for a property to be sent to tax sale may serve as incentive for payment.

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**Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 573 and HB 1009 of 2025.

**Designated Cross File:** SB 290 (Senator McCray)(By Request - Baltimore City Administration) - Judicial Proceedings and Budget and Taxation.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 6, 2026  
sj/tso

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