



October 7, 2025

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

TO: Colette R. Gresham, Esq.
Acting Council Administrator

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THRU: Lavinia Baxter 
Senior Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: Alex Hirtle 
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CB-080-2025 Nuisances

CB-080-2025 (*proposed by: Councilmember Harrison*)

Assigned to the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment Committee (TIEE)

AN ACT CONCERNING NUISANCES for the purpose of clarifying the legislative intent of the County public and neighborhood nuisance law; adding a new prohibition on activities by promoters; providing for the prohibition by promoters for the operation of a public or neighborhood nuisance; providing for a certain notice by the Nuisance Abatement Board; providing for the timing of a certain written decision detailing the Board's final order or action; increasing fine amounts and providing for certain criminal and civil penalties; and generally regarding public and neighborhood.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: Most likely modest expenditures.

Revenues: Probable increase in revenues.

Indirect Impact:

Potentially favorable.

Legislative Summary:

CB-080-2025 was presented on September 16th 2025 and referred to the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee (TIEE). This bill provides that public and neighborhood nuisances exist in the County in the obstruction of the enjoyment of private property, the use of residential properties for activities that are prohibited in residential neighborhoods and zones, including commercial-style events, and other public and neighborhood nuisances. It focuses on the application of the nuisance abatement law to promoters. It provides that a promoter shall mean an individual or entity who organizes, publicizes, and facilitates events, gatherings, parties, or similar activities on premises, including by providing essential event information such as date, time, location, and theme, even if that individual or entity is otherwise unconnected to the premises and regardless of whether they have an interest in the premises. It provides for the prohibition of the operation of a public or neighborhood nuisance by a promoter.

Current Law/Background:

This legislation adds language to Subtitle 14, Division 14 (Nuisances), Sec. 14-170 to 14-174 of the County Code. It seeks to better define neighborhood and public nuisances, add a definition of event promotor. Criminal and civil penalties have been increased to incentivize adherence to the law.

The sponsor of a similar Bill has indicated much of the text of this legislation came from the Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement (DPIE), the agency that oversees (in large part) the regulation and enforcement of nuisance violations. DPIE apparently has experienced regular incidents of homes being rented or utilized for late-night parties, creating noise, traffic, and general nuisance issues within particular communities. The legislation was crafted to identify “promoters” of such parties or events and hold them accountable for said violations. Promoters often organize, publicize, and facilitate events, gatherings, parties, or similar activities at a premises, but may otherwise be unconnected and/or unavailable at the event itself.

Resource Personnel:

- Kathy Canning, Legislative Attorney
 - Eric B. Bowman, Chief of Staff, Council District 9
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Discussion/Policy Analysis:

The County Council has had regular and numerous complaints regarding nuisance violations that often include late night/early morning events with noise, traffic, litter, and associated nuisances that come with such events. The Council has reacted with additional resources to DPIE that included additional funds to pilot a program of inspectors, who worked evenings and weekends in search of various violations.¹ The County has also had 15 inspectors and five (5) police officers trained in noise violations (including operation of noise [decibel] meters) that can indicate when a violation is occurring.² DPIE has also hired a contractor that oversees the regulations of short-term rentals to ensure proper licensing within the County.³

Given the additional text added to Subtitle 14 to further inhibit nuisance violations that obstruct the enjoyment of private property, and prevent residential properties being used for nuisance-related activities, the below questions need to be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of this proposed legislation:

- What is DPIE's and/or the County's strategy for identifying, charging, and prosecution of a "promotor"? Given much organizing, publicizing, and facilitation of such events is done in a virtual world, meaning much of it is online (through the internet), the promotor may not even reside in the County, much less the State of Maryland. Finding, charging, and prosecution may be extremely challenging.
- What new resources and tools does the Department or the County have to actually force a violator to pay any criminal or civil penalties? The legislation has increased the fines considerably to deter nuisance violations, but the Department (and County) has an unremarkable history in actually collecting fines from violators. For example, in FY 2025, DPIE issued over \$605K in fines for Building Inspection violations- fines outstanding were marked at nearly \$500K for that period.⁴ Likewise, the Department issued over \$1 million in fines for violations with property standards for FY 2024- as of the Budget Report publication, outstanding fines were nearly \$660K.

If this legislation is passed and is expected reduce the frequency of nuisance events, largely created by unsanctioned parties and gatherings in residential areas, the two questions above will need to be addressed.

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Enactment of CB-080-2025 will most likely have a modest negative direct fiscal impact on the County in the form additional expenditures due to the increased staff and or workload for stepped-up enforcement and prosecution of violators. DPIE did not respond to a fiscal impact inquiry, but

¹ FY 2024 Year End Operations/Program Review & Evaluation, February 2025, page 4.

² IBID, page 5.

³ IBID, pages 5 and 6.

⁴ FY 2026 DPIE Budget Report, page 8.

it is likely that additional staff, or possibly current staff overtime will be needed to step up the enforcement of violators to reduce long-term nuisance violations. Additionally, with the notable increase in violation fines for both criminal and civil penalties, it can be expected that there would be a revenue increase for the County, assuming a significant percentage of the violations can be collected.

- *Indirect Impact*

Enactment of CB-080-2025 could have a favorable indirect impact on the County by increasing the quality of life and reduction in crime within our jurisdiction. The Council recognizes that violations of nuisance laws can obstruct enjoyment of private property, and create other externalities such as prostitution, human trafficking, noise, traffic, litter, and other related neighborhood and community concerns; reduction of these violations would logically reduce the nuisances and related crime that comes with it.

- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget*

No.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The proposed Bill shall be effective forty-five (45) calendar days after it becomes law.

If you require additional information, or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please reach out to me via phone or email.