

Commercial Real Estate Attorney Appointed to Mayor's Ethics Board

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Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake signed two bills to strengthen local ethics laws by increasing independence, transparency and training, and named three Baltimore City residents to serve on the reconstituted Ethics Board.

Mayor Rawlings-Blake also signed Council Bill 10-0446 'Public Ethics Law - Clarifications and Expanded Coverage,' sponsored by Councilman **Bill Cole** (District-11) which closes loopholes, and expands and clarifies provisions related to gift solicitations and financial disclosures of public officials. After signing both bills, Mayor Rawlings-Blake announced the appointment of three independent Baltimore City residents to serve on the newly reconstituted City Ethics Board:

Mr. **Guy Flynn** is a partner at **DLA Piper**, practicing in the area of commercial real estate development and finance. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia Law School. Mr. Flynn was named a Maryland Super Lawyer by Law & Politics and Baltimore magazines from 2007-2010. Based on peer reviews, he is listed in The Best Lawyers in America. Mr. Flynn is a member of the Board of Trustees of the **Walters Art Museum**, and he sits on the Boards of Directors of Health Care for the Homeless and Family & Children's Services of Central Maryland, Inc.

Ms. **Dawna Cobb** is the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at the University of Maryland School of Law. A graduate of Fordham University School of Law, Ms. Cobb has served as counsel to the Maryland Attorney General, Bowie State University, University of Maryland University College, and the State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Ms. Cobb is a member of the Baltimore Women's Giving Circle and past-President of Abell Improvement Association.

Ms. **Linda Bowler Pierson** is a grants administrator for the **John J. Leidy, Kathryn Ames, Ira J. Basler, Jr.** and **Mary K. Basler**, and the **Thomas W. Bradley Foundations**. She is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park. Ms. Pierson serves on the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Baltimore City, the Maryland Attorney Grievance Commission, and the Maryland Access to Justice Commission

The Mayor also signed Council Bill 10-0445, 'Public Ethics Law - Ethics Board Composition, Tenure, and Ethics Training,' the last bill introduced by then Council President Rawlings-Blake. The new law restructures the City Ethics Board to make it more independent, mandates more training and disclosure, and allows for annual review and encourages board recommendations for new improvements. The bill represents some of the most sweeping changes to the City Ethics Code in two decades. Specifically, the new law:

- Allows the President of the City Council and the Comptroller to nominate members, and staggers the term of all appointees, ensuring more independence.
- Provides that the Ethics Board, not the Mayor, shall elect its own chair.
- Bans City, State and other County lobbyists from serving on the Board.
- Excludes City, State or County Employees from serving on the Board.
- Requires at least 2 of the Mayor's appointments to be members of the Maryland Bar.
- Broadens the category of individuals, namely key individuals who serve on City boards and commissions, to undergo new ethics training.