

Government of the District of Columbia  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Glen Lee  
Chief Financial Officer

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The Honorable Phil Mendelson  
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

**FROM:** Glen Lee   
Chief Financial Officer

**DATE:** October 28, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Fiscal Impact Statement – Smoke Detector Safety Amendment Act of 2025

**REFERENCE:** Bill 26-93, Draft Committee Print as provided to the Office of Revenue Analysis on October 8, 2026

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**Conclusion**

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2027 through fiscal year 2030 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

**Background**

District law<sup>1</sup> imposes standards for security and fire alarm systems. The bill amends these standards to prohibit

<sup>2</sup> the sale or installation of any smoke detector<sup>3</sup> that is solely battery-operated and not tamper-resistant, defined as designed such that the battery powering the smoke detector cannot be manually removed, replaced, or disabled by the consumer.<sup>4</sup> Violations may result in civil fines up to \$500, along with additional penalties and fees.<sup>5</sup> The bill makes this effective July 1, 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> D.C. Official Code § 7-2808.

<sup>2</sup> Effective July 1, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Pursuant to Titles I through III of the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Civil Infractions Act of 1985, effective October 5, 1985 (D.C. Law 6-42; D.C. Official Code § 2-1801.01 et seq.).

The bill establishes a complaint process to address potential violations. Anyone may file a complaint with the Mayor alleging that a person or company sold or installed a smoke detector in violation of the bill's provisions. The bill requires complaints to be submitted in writing utilizing a form made available online and must include the name of the individual or company; the location, date and time of the violation; and any other identifying details. The bill does not require an inspector to witness the violation for the complaint to be valid. The bill permits the complainant to appear and testify in any related administrative or judicial proceeding. If the Mayor finds that a complaint is valid, the bill requires the Mayor to issue a Notice of Infraction (NOI)<sup>6</sup> and a copy of the NOI must also be sent to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH).

### **Financial Plan Impact**

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2027 through fiscal year 2030 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. The Fire and Emergency Medical Service Department (Fire and EMS), the Department of Buildings (DOB), the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP) and OAH do not require additional resources to implement the bill. Tamper-resistant alarms with sealed, non-replaceable batteries and 10-year lifespan stability are already becoming the industry norm and support the District's efforts to ensure alarms remain operational. DOB will revise the fire code<sup>7</sup> to match national criteria, including smoke alarm replacement intervals, end-of-life signaling, and other safety features already standard in modern detectors.

Fire and EMS already operates an established community outreach program and a complaint investigation process. Fire and EMS, through the Fire Prevention Division's All Hands-on Prevention initiative, conducts monthly door to door outreach across all wards, offering smoke detectors purchased through existing funding, donations, and grants. The agency also inspects existing detectors and replaces 9-volt batteries when needed, ensuring residents have safe, operable devices. Fire and EMS is already updating public education materials and partnering with media outlets for fire prevention messaging. Complaints regarding non-compliant smoke detector sales will be handled by the Fire Marshal's Office, which will investigate the point-of-sale and follow up directly with the retailer as part of its current procedures. Though the bill is effective July 1, 2025, Fire and EMS will investigate complaints active upon the bill's enactment. The bill complements this existing outreach; therefore, Fire and EMS can implement the legislation within existing resources.

While DLCP licenses the security alarm dealers, Fire and EMS is responsible for the standards pertaining to the security alarms, and DLCP does not require additional resources to issue any applicable NOIs. The bill does not require DOB to execute new enforcement activity, and DOB does not require additional resources to issue any applicable NOIs under DOB's current enforcement activity. OAH can manage responses and hearings for any NOIs issued utilizing existing resources.

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<sup>6</sup> Pursuant to the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Civil Infractions Act of 1985, effective October 5, 1985 (D.C. Law 6-42; D.C. Official Code § 2-1801.01 et seq.).

<sup>7</sup> Title 12-H of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR).