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Thursday, April 23, 2009

Live music bill could ease license mandate for city venues

Baltimore Business Journal - by [Sue Schultz](#) Staff

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Existing live entertainment venues in Baltimore City may be exempt from needing to obtain new licenses for music.

That's according to an amendment added to a bill introduced last July by **Baltimore City Council** President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake that would make it easier for bars, restaurants and taverns not already zoned for live music to add it. City lawmakers could vote on that legislation by April 30.

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But the proposal drew fire from businesses that already offer concerts in the city stating that they would have to reapply for the new licenses and pay a new fee. A handful of local venue owners formed the **Baltimore Live Arts Business Association** in March to voice concerns over the new process.

Following a handful of community meetings held in the past month, Rawlings-Blake has amended the legislation to give existing entertainment venues up to three years before having to apply for a new licenses.

No fees for the new licenses have been set, said Ryan O'Doherty, a spokesman with Blake's office.

Under the city's current laws, those businesses not zoned for live entertainment would have to apply to change the zoning regulations. The new legislation could allow businesses to apply for a licenses to offer live music without having to apply for rezoning.

The city council will hold its final community meeting on the proposal tonight at 6:30 p.m. at Federal Hill Preparatory School.

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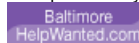
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