



February 14, 2023

Office of the Mayor  
250 City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**Re: Amendment to previous Agreement with BGE – Maintenance of Conduit System**

Dear Mayor Scott:

The Northeast Community Organization, Inc. (“NECO”) is deeply concerned about Baltimore City’s amendment agreement with Baltimore Gas and Electric (“BGE”). Under such an agreement, BGE will take over the maintenance of the City’s conduit system. In addition, BGE will pay \$134 million for capital improvements to the conduit system and pay an annual occupancy fee of \$1.5 million as well. Even more concerning is that the original agreement and its terms have not been made available to the public.

The City’s accelerated approval process for this agreement is alarming, given your announcement of this amended agreement was recent. Shortly after your announcement, it is now set to go before the Board of Estimates for an approval vote on February 15, 2023. We believe there has not been sufficient time for public discussion, investigation and/or vetting.

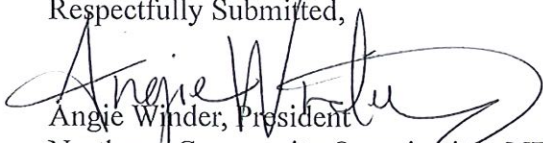
Moreover, other concerning factors are as follows: In November 2022, residents approved a charter amendment banning the City from selling or leasing the conduit system. We believe that allowing BGE to take over the maintenance of the conduit system is very similar to a lease. We are also worried this agreement may result in substantial BGE rate increases. And, we believe this proposed agreement may prevent Baltimore City from using the conduit system to provide public broadband service to struggling communities. Furthermore, the conduits are used by other utility companies that already pay utilization fees and already manifest the intention to sue the City if this agreement moves forward without further investigation.

Mayor Scott, you promised that your administration would operate with transparency and accountability. Unfortunately, residents view this swift action as a lack of transparency. Also, community members raised serious questions regarding the proposed agreement without receiving any concrete answers from your office.

We respectfully request that you postpone voting on this agreement until after the City Council has had an opportunity to conduct their investigation. Moreover, we kindly ask that you

hold public hearings to give residents an opportunity to have their questions answered. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our requests.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Angie Winder, President  
Northeast Community Organization (NECO)

CC: City Council President Nick Mosby  
City Comptroller Bill Henry  
City Inspector General Isabel Cumming  
City Solicitor Ebony Thompson  
Director of Department of Public Works Jason Mitchell  
Congressman Kweisi Mfume, District 7  
State Senator Mary Washington  
Delegate Regina T. Boyce  
Delegate Elizabeth Embry  
Councilman Ryan Dorsey, District 3  
Councilman Mark Conway, District 4  
Councilwoman Odette Ramos, District 14  
Lia Lynch, Liaison at Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods  
Danelle Pinder, Liaison at Council Presidents' Office  
Baltimore Gas and Electric  
Community Association Presidents in the NECO catchment area

**NECO Purpose:** To *unite* the neighborhood associations, community organizations, and institutions within the designated area; To *articulate* the needs and concerns of the NECO area regarding community development and economic, commercial, educational, recreational, and environmental issues to the City and State governments; To *provide* a forum to educate NECO members and the means for public discourse and education; and to *support, assist and serve* as a resource to member organizations.