

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, That Sections 678 and 679 of the Charter and Public Local Laws of Baltimore City (1949 Edition) be and they are hereby repealed; and that new Section 678 be and it is hereby enacted in lieu thereof, to stand in the place of the sections so repealed, and to read as follows:*

*Condemnation—Immediate Taking*

678.

(a) *Whenever any proceedings are instituted under Article 33A of the Code of Public General Laws of the State of Maryland, by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore for the acquisition of any property for any public purpose whatsoever, the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, simultaneously with the filing of said proceedings or at any time thereafter, may file a Petition under oath stating that it is necessary for the City to have immediate possession of said property, and the reasons therefor, and that the necessity for immediate taking is not because of any substantial fault or neglect of the City. The City shall also set forth in said Petition for Immediate Taking the amount it estimates to be the fair value of the said property to be acquired, and of the respective interests of each of the owners thereof if more than one, which shall be substantiated by the Affidavits of two qualified appraisers attached to said Petition. The City shall deposit into Court, simultaneously with the filing of said Petition, the amount of said estimate of the fair value of the property to be acquired.*

(b) *Upon the filing of any such Petition for Immediate Taking, the Court may direct the City to give such notice to the Defendants as the Court may deem proper. The Court may set the matter for hearing on the Petition, but any such hearing shall be held within seven days from the date of the filing of said Petition; otherwise, the Court shall act on said Petition ex parte within said seven day period.*

(c) *If it appears from said Petition, with or without supporting Affidavits or sworn testimony, that the public interest requires the City to have immediate possession of said property, the Court shall, within not more than seven days after the filing of said Petition, pass an Order, either ex parte or after a hearing, directing that the City may take possession of said property after the expiration of thirty days from the filing of said Petition, or earlier, in the Court's discretion. Upon passing such Order, the Court may direct the City to give such notice of said Order to the Defendants as the Court may deem proper, but the Court's requirement of notice shall not extend the time within which the City may take possession of said property.*

(d) *If an ex parte Order for immediate possession is passed, without notice having been given to the Defendants, and if, in the Court's opinion, the Defendants will not have had an opportunity to have an appraisal made of said property prior to the time that the City takes possession thereof, the Court may appoint a qualified independent appraiser to value the property and the respective interests of the Defendants therein, and to return said appraisal under his hand and seal to the Court prior to the expiration of thirty days from the date of the filing of the aforesaid Petition for Immediate Taking. The compensation of such appraiser shall be fixed by the Court and shall be paid by the City. The Court may also require the City, at its ex-*