



SYNOPSIS

Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology

City Council Resolution: 21-0039R

Violence Against Women - An Overlooked Public Health Crisis

Sponsor: Councilmember McCray, et al

Introduced: April 19, 2021

Purpose:

For the purpose of inviting the Police Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department, the Health Commissioner of the Baltimore City Health Department, the Baltimore City State’s Attorney, the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success, the Sheriff of the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office, and certain community-based organizations to appear before the Baltimore City Council to discuss the rise in violence against women and what strategies are being put in place to reverse this epidemic.

Effective: Upon enactment

AGENCY REPORTS

Police Department	
Health Department	
Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement	
Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success	
Sheriff’s Office	
State’s Attorney’s Office	
City Solicitor	Favorable

ANALYSIS

The resolution invites the Police Commissioner, the Health Commissioner, the Baltimore City State's Attorney, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Sheriff of Baltimore City, and community-based organizations to appear before the Baltimore City Council to discuss the rise in violence against women and what strategies are being put in place to reverse this epidemic.

The World Health Organization has stated that violence against women – particularly intimate partner violence and sexual violence – is a major public health problem and a violation of women's human rights. Intimate partner violence and sexual violence cause serious short- and long-term physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health problems for women. The health impacts of these forms of violence can include physical injury, unintended pregnancy, miscarriage, depression, post-traumatic stress and other anxiety disorders, sleep difficulties, eating disorders, and suicide attempts.

In 2020, the Baltimore Police Department reported its highest number of female homicides in at least a decade – or possibly ever – with nearly 50 female victims. The Police Department and other experts have stated that some of the driving forces contributing to these incidents are intimate partner violence, a rise in the number of women involved with the people or places where violent crime is occurring, and random acts of violence. Intimate partner violence accounts for 21% of all violent crime. When guns are present, there is a 500% greater chance that the incident will end up deadly. A recent report in the Baltimore Sun noted that domestic violence cases in Baltimore City have increased by nearly one-third during the pandemic and are often resulting in more serious injuries.


ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note: None

Information Source(s):

- World Health Organization, Violence Against Women Fact Sheet
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>
- Baltimore Sun, The warnings came true: Domestic violence has spiked in Baltimore area amid pandemic, data and experts reveal
<https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/crime/bs-md-ci-cr-domestic-violence-increases-20210402-6lfzejoqonbsdc4erd2pwvyq6a-story.html>
- Reporting Agencies
- Resolution 21-0039R

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