

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0243R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Holton, Henry, Costello, Stokes, Branch, Kraft, Middleton,
Welch, Clarke, Spector, Curran, Reisinger, Scott
Introduced and adopted: July 20, 2015

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

**1 Commending the Removal of the Confederate Flag from the
2 South Carolina Capitol Grounds**

3 FOR the purpose of commending the decision by South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and the
4 state's legislature to remove the Confederate flag from the grounds of the South Carolina
5 State Capitol.

6 Recitals

7 Today we join in the nationwide commendation of the decision by South Carolina Governor
8 Nikki Haley and the state's legislature to remove the Confederate flag from the grounds of the
9 South Carolina State Capitol. With this decision, a century and a half after the end of the Civil
10 War, the Confederate flag finally no longer flies over any seats of government.

11 As Governor Haley said in urging the flag's removal:

12 This has been a very difficult time for our state we have stared evil in the eye
13 and watched good, prayerful people killed in one of the most sacred of places. We
14 were hurt and broken and we needed to heal. We were able to start that process,
15 not by issues – talking about issues that divide us, but by holding vigils. By
16 hugging neighbors, by honoring those we lost, and by falling to our knees in
17 prayer....

18Five years ago it was said in the last 50 years South Carolina is the state that
19 has changed the most for the better. That was true when I quoted it at my first
20 inauguration in 2011; it's even more true today. We have changed through the
21 times and we'll continue to do so. But that does not mean we forget our history.
22 History is often filled with emotion. And that's truer in South Carolina than a lot
23 of other places....

24For many people in our state the [Confederate] flag stands for traditions that
25 are noble. Traditions of history, of heritage and of ancestry.

26 The hate-filled murderer who massacred our brothers and sisters in Charleston
27 has a sick and twisted view of the flag. In no way does he reflect the people of our
28 state who respect, and in many ways, revere it.

29 Those South Carolinians view the flag as a symbol of respect, integrity and
30 duty. They also see it as a memorial. A way to honor ancestors who came to the
31 service of their state during time of conflict. That is not hate, nor is it racism.

32 At the same time, for many others in South Carolina, the flag is a deeply
33 offensive symbol of a brutally oppressive past. As a state, we can survive and

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 indeed we can thrive as we have done whilst still being home to both of those
2 viewpoints. We do not need to declare a winner and a loser here....

3One hundred and fifty years after the end of the Civil War, the time has
4 come. There will be some in our state who see this as a sad moment. I respect that.
5 But know this, for good and for bad, whether it is on the statehouse grounds or in a
6 museum the flag will always be a part of the soil in South Carolina. But this is a
7 moment in which we can say that that flag, while an integral part of our past, does
8 not represent the future of our great state.

9 The murderer now locked up in Charleston said he hoped his actions would
10 start a race war. We have an opportunity to show that not only was he wrong, but
11 that just the opposite is happening.

12 My hope is that by removing a symbol that divides us we can move forward as
13 a state in harmony and we can honor the nine blessed souls who are now in
14 heaven....

15I understand that what I have said here today will generate a lot of interest.
16 What I ask is that the focus still remain on the nine victims of this horrible
17 tragedy. Their families, the Mother Emanuel family, the AME church family, the
18 South Carolina family. We all deserve time to grieve, and to remember and to
19 heal. We will take it, and I ask that you respect that.

20 We know that bringing down the confederate flag will not bring back the nine
21 kind souls that were taken from us, nor rid us of the hate and bigotry that drove a
22 monster through the doors of Mother Emanuel that night. Some divisions are
23 bigger than a flag. The evil we saw last Wednesday comes from a place much
24 deeper, much darker.

25 But we are not going to allow this symbol to divide us any longer. The fact
26 that people are choosing to use it as a sign of hate is something that we cannot
27 stand. The fact that it causes pain to so many is enough to move it from the capitol
28 grounds.

29 Though made swiftly in response to the atrocities in Charleston, this was a change that was
30 long overdue. We join with Governor Haley in hoping that finally removing any official
31 approval for a flag that is a symbol of hatred and bigotry to many can be a watershed moment in
32 the effort to rid our nation of those scourges and bring all Americans together.

33 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
34 Council commends the decision by South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and the state's
35 legislature to remove the Confederate flag from the grounds of the South Carolina State Capitol.

36 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
37 Governor of South Carolina, the leadership of the South Carolina Senate and House, and the
38 Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.