

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 11-0272R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmembers Welch, D’Adamo, Branch, Henry, Holton, Reisinger, Curran,  
Kraft, Spector, Middleton  
Introduced and read first time: March 28, 2011  
Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

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Committee Report: Favorable  
Adopted: June 20, 2011

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**A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING**

**Investigative Hearing – Cell Phones – Access to 311**

FOR the purpose of inviting major cell phone service providers in Baltimore City to discuss with the City Council the feasibility of providing 311 access to cell phone subscribers in the City; the cost, if any, to customers; and a time line for implementing 311 access by cellular device in the Baltimore metropolitan area.

**Recitals**

On June 11, 2010, the *Gazette.Net* hailed the launch of Montgomery County’s 311 phone system as “arguably the biggest step Montgomery County will take this year to restructure government and save money.” The County Executive said the size of county government, which has 13,500 phone numbers, made the previous system of calling departments “unworkable and too costly.”

Baltimore City was the first in the nation to implement the 311 non-emergency call system in 1996, originally to relieve the burden on the Police Department’s 911 call center where up to 60% of the calls received were for non-emergency incidents. The City’s 311 service has since expanded to include the City’s One Call Center to access all City agencies and the services they provide. 311 was approved for nationwide use by the FCC in early 1997, and it is estimated that today more than 18% of the population has access.

Montgomery County’s 2010 adoption of the 311 non-emergency call system lags behind the City’s progressive implementation by nearly 15 years, but access by the citizenry does not. Major companies, such as Verizon, AT&T, and Sprint, have entered into agreements to provide cell phone access, and other companies, such as T-Mobile, Cricket, and Vonage that do not currently support 311, are “in talks” with county officials.

In *Nine Imperatives For Leadership of 311-Enabled Government*, a 2008 publication of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, notes one of the *MAJOR FUTURES/MEGA TRENDS* – “Every citizen’s a sensor: Historically, the reporting of community problems relied on citizens using landline telephone to report potholes, abandoned cars, and the like. With many citizens now carrying cell phones, many of which are geospatially enabled, every citizen can now “instantly” report broken hydrants, fountains, or benches – while strolling in parks, for example, or along roadways. Using scanning bars and other technologies,

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

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1 records can be made of the precise hydrant, bench or lamp pole in need of service. Anywhere,  
2 anyone, anytime reports are now possible.”

3 Baltimore City led the nation in the implementation of 311; we cannot fall behind in  
4 providing our residents full access through modern technology.

5 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this  
6 Body invites the major cell phone service providers in Baltimore City to discuss with the City  
7 Council the feasibility of providing 311 access to cell phone subscribers in the City; the cost, if  
8 any, to customers; and a time line for implementing 311 access by cellular device in the  
9 Baltimore metropolitan area.

10 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
11 President of AT&T Mid Atlantic, the CEO of Verizon, the CEO of Sprint Nextel Corporation,  
12 the President/CEO of T-Mobile, the CEO of Cricket, the CEO of Vonage, the Director of the  
13 Municipal Telephone Exchange, the Director of CitiStat, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to  
14 the City Council.