

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 13-0134R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Young, Councilmembers Middleton, Holton, Henry, Cole, Stokes,
Branch, Kraft, Scott, Welch, Mosby

Introduced and read first time: November 18, 2013

Assigned to: Public Safety Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Police Commissioner, Department of Finance

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – Police Department Staffing Concerns**

3 FOR the purpose of calling on the Police Commissioner and representatives from the Department
4 of Finance to appear before the City Council to discuss the Police Department’s short and
5 long term staffing plan, the number of officers available for duty versus the authorized
6 strength of the force, the Department’s use of overtime to fill staffing gaps, and how staffing
7 policies and projections impact the Police Department’s ability to protect the public.

8 **Recitals**

9 Staffing levels and deployments have long been a source of concern at the Baltimore City
10 Police Department, and there are indications that the situation is currently worsening rather than
11 improving. Presently, the Department has hundreds of vacancies, putting it at roughly 75% of its
12 authorized strength.

13 This manpower shortage can be exacerbated by inefficient deployment patterns, as well as the
14 prolonged presence of numerous officers on suspended-with-pay lists. For one reason or another,
15 the Police Department all too often does not have enough officers to achieve goals that its
16 authorized strength, one of the highest ratios of officers to residents in the nation, would appear
17 to make easily achievable.

18 Attempting to meet the Department’s goals and to keep Baltimore’s citizens safe, with the
19 actual resources available, costs the City large amounts of overtime pay, damages officer morale,
20 and reduces the Department’s ability to protect the public. This, in turn, contributes to
21 unacceptably high attrition rates among veteran officers and difficulties in recruiting new officers
22 that serve to further worsen the staffing problems.

23 There are certainly steps that could be taken to help the Department break out of this vicious
24 cycle. For instance, some have questioned the efficiency and impartiality of the Department’s
25 internal investigations that can leave officers in limbo for long periods of time, costing the City
26 money but helping neither the Department nor the officers’ careers. Some have suggested that

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

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1 improvements here could save money, reduce staffing uncertainty, and bolster morale. The
2 Department's leadership has successfully lobbied for hundreds of thousands of City dollars for
3 outside consultants to review deployment patterns for inefficiencies and personnel policies for
4 opportunities for improvement. And the administration has repeatedly called for and funded
5 efforts to recruit more officers.

6 All of these approaches doubtless have merit, but it is not clear at the moment whether any of
7 them alone, or in combination, are being pursued in a way that will improve the situation over
8 both the short and long term. With the Police Department's staffing plan so central to the
9 Department's ability to keep Baltimoreans safe and with so many ideas being floated about how
10 to improve it, it is vital that the Council be kept apprised of how the Commissioner intends to
11 address these staffing issues going forward.

12 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
13 Council calls on the Police Commissioner and representatives from the Department of Finance to
14 appear before it to discuss the Police Department's short and long term staffing plan, the number
15 of officers available for duty versus the authorized strength of the force, the Police Department's
16 use of overtime to fill staffing gaps, and how staffing policies and projections impact the Police
17 Department's ability to protect the public.

18 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
19 Police Commissioner, the Director of Finance, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City
20 Council.