

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 06-0166R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Harris
Introduced and read first time: April 10, 2006
Assigned to: Public Safety Subcommittee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Police Commissioner

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Baltimore City Police – Return to Uniform**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting the Police Commissioner to return plain clothes detective,
4 undercover, and other specialty squads to uniform dress code to increase law enforcement
5 visibility and public awareness of police presence.

6 **Recitals**

7 In *The Psychological Influence of the Police Uniform*, an article published in the FBI Law
8 Enforcement Bulletin, March 2001, it states that the uniform of a police officer has been found to
9 have a profound psychological impact on those who view it. The uniform of a police officer
10 conveys the power and authority of the person wearing it and is a powerful clue as to the
11 wearer’s authority, capabilities, and status.

12 Research has revealed that the uniform has a subconscious psychological influence on
13 people, based on the person’s preconceived feelings about police officers. When a person wears
14 the police uniform, citizens tend to be more cooperative with his or her requests, and people tend
15 to curb their illegal or deviant behavior when a police uniform is visible in the area.

16 Currently the Baltimore Police Department operates nearly 100 specialized units deploying
17 at least several hundred officers. These specialized units include the Flex Squad, the Special
18 Enforcement Unit, and the Organized Crime Unit and consist of officers exempted from regular
19 patrol duties to target specific areas of crime prevention.

20 Baltimore’s continuing high homicide rate – 263 murders in 2005, not significantly less than
21 that of 269 in 2004 – is tangible evidence that a review of the Department’s policy is necessary.
22 Deploying officers in specialized squads has not appreciably affected the number of people
23 dying on our City streets. Maybe it is time that the “*thin Blue line*” becomes visibly *thicker*.

24 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the
25 Baltimore Police Commissioner is requested to return plain clothes detective, undercover, and
26 other specialty squads to uniform dress code to increase law enforcement visibility and public
27 awareness of police presence.

28 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
29 Police Commissioner, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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