

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 06-0227R  
(Resolution)**

---

Introduced by: Councilmembers Mitchell, Curran, Young, Branch, Kraft, Clarke, Welch,  
Reisinger, Harris, D’Adamo, Holton, Conaway, President Dixon  
Introduced and adopted: October 30, 2006

---

**A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING**

**Informational Hearing – Legal Aid Bureau**

FOR the purpose of requesting that the Legal Aid Bureau brief the Council regarding its request that the City consider a grant of \$250,000 for the upcoming fiscal year to support its general legal services for Baltimore’s underprivileged.

**Recitals**

The Legal Aid Bureau is often the only option for the 27,864 Baltimore families that are below the poverty line and are seeking legal help in dealing with errant landlords, contract family law matters, and tort matters. Due to high demand however, the Baltimore City Legal Aid Bureau is having difficulty providing these services due to financial constraints.

Of the current 11 statewide Legal Aid Bureau offices, the Baltimore City office is the largest. The City office includes its hub at 500 E. Lexington Street, a satellite office in Cherry Hill, a telephone hotline unit, and a walk-in intake unit. Last year, the Baltimore Legal Aid Bureau handled approximately 19,200 cases – roughly 43% of the total number of Legal Aid Bureau cases in the State of Maryland. Currently, the City Legal Aid Bureau office has specialized legal units to provide for the legal needs of Baltimore City families. These units include a Child Support division and the “Saving Homes for At-Risk Families and Seniors” program. This program aims to preserve affordable housing for low income residents.

Current funding for the Legal Aid Bureau is dependant on a wide array of sources, which include federal agencies such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Legal Services Corporation, the State government, local jurisdictions, foundations, and private contributions. In terms of the local jurisdictions, most of Baltimore City’s neighbors provide funding for their respective Legal Aid Bureaus. Baltimore City’s support has decreased over the past decade from \$44,000 in 1995 to \$15,000 in 2005.

The Legal Aid Bureau believes that increased city funding is necessary for it to service the high demand that exists in Baltimore City. It also believes that emerging problems in the City will require more intensive Legal Aid involvement, such as employment, education, and federal benefits issues. Further, because of the large number of ex-offenders in Baltimore City, there are continuing legal barriers to housing, employment, public benefits, and healthcare that must be dealt with on a case by case basis. These barriers, if not addressed through appropriate legal help and representation, could lead to recidivism.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this Body requests that the Legal Aid Bureau brief the council regarding its request that the City

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

**Council Bill 06-0227R**

1 consider a grant of \$250,000 for the upcoming fiscal year to support its general legal services for  
2 Baltimore's underprivileged.

3 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
4 Legal Aid Bureau, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Council.