

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 16-0305R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Clarke, Curran, Scott, Costello, Middleton, Holton, Henry,
Stokes, Spector, Kraft, Reisinger, Welch, Branch, President Young

Introduced and read first time: June 6, 2016

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Baltimore City Board of Elections

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – April 2016 Election Problems**

3 FOR the purpose of reviewing with the Maryland State and Baltimore City Boards of Elections
4 the problems which impeded the Baltimore City Primary Election of April 26, 2016, to
5 identify specific problems and request the City and State to develop a plan of specific steps to
6 ensure a fair and efficient Baltimore City General Election on November 8, 2016.

7 **Recitals**

8 The right to vote is at the heart of our nation’s democratic system. When voting is
9 compromised, whether through fraud or error, the system itself is at risk and must demonstrate
10 exceptional efforts and document specific remedies and their implementation to restore
11 confidence of future efficient and secure accounting for each and every vote validly cast.

12 In the Primary election of Tuesday, April 26, 2016 many polls failed to open on time for the
13 lack of election judges. Lines formed before the 7am opening, doors remained closed, many
14 voters had to leave and may never have voted.

15 When late-arriving judges did appear, the day’s experience demonstrated a lack of practical
16 training among many new and even experienced judges, all faced with new paper ballots, new
17 protocols for recording them, and a rash of somehow inaccurate party affiliation records for
18 longtime voters.

19 To cope, voting precincts defaulted to an exceptional use of provisional ballots, many of
20 which have never been adequately accounted for, given the numbers and the circumstances in
21 which so many were cast. We will never know how many of these were cast by properly
22 registered voters defaulted to provisional through missing or incorrect precinct records.

23 According to The Sun’s report of June 1, 2016, “A review by the state election board found
24 that about 1,700 ballots cast in Baltimore’s primary election were handled improperly. The board
25 concluded that 1,188 provisional ballots were inappropriately scanned into the vote tally on
26 Election Day – without judges verifying that the voters were eligible – and 555 other provisional
27 ballots were not considered”.

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

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1 Despite eventual election certifications, voters and the general public have lost confidence in
2 the system and require public accounting of problems identified and resolved to ensure a vastly
3 improved operation of the Baltimore City General Election on Tuesday, November 8, 2016.

4 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
5 Council calls upon leaders of both the State and Baltimore City Election Boards to appear to
6 outline the specific problems experienced in the April 26 election and discuss the plan to
7 successfully address those problems, including specific steps being taken to assure the public of
8 corrective measures.

9 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
10 Election Director, the President of the Baltimore City Board of Elections, the State Administrator
11 of Elections, the Chairman of the Maryland Board of Elections, and the Mayor's Legislative
12 Liaison to the City Council.