

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 06-0229R
(Resolution)**

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

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

1 Informational Hearing – Maryland Freedom Board of Education

2 FOR the purpose of inviting members of the Maryland Freedom Board of Education to share with
3 the City Council and the general public information on the genesis of the organization, the
4 specific funding and programmatic goals to achieve parity in public education throughout
5 Maryland, the action plan for achieving the goals of the Board, and plans for the future
6 advocacy agenda of the grassroots organization.

7 Recitals

8 On Saturday afternoon, October 14, 2006, the Baltimore Algebra Project, Baltimore
9 Education Advocates, the Baltimore NAACP, and hundreds of supporters rallied at Green Mount
10 Cemetery to launch Freedom Fall, Baltimore City's new educational rights movement. Inspired
11 by Mississippi's 1964 Freedom Summer Civil Rights movement, concerned young people and
12 supportive adults later coalesced at the Seventh Baptist Church to demand answers about the
13 deplorable status of the Baltimore City Public School System, and the Maryland Freedom Board
14 of Education (MFBE) was born.

15 A spokesperson for the Freedom Board reportedly declared that "this is about civil rights – if
16 you don't have the same adequate public education in the city that you have out in the counties –
17 that's inequality there. This system, the courts have ruled, has been chronically underfunded for
18 years. It doesn't make sense when state officials make comparisons between the amount of
19 money city students receive to those in other places. The needs here are greater". The Freedom
20 Board's first 3 resolutions are said to have included a letter to the gubernatorial candidates
21 demanding \$1.08 billion that the students say the Baltimore City Public School System is owed,
22 based on recent Circuit Court rulings against the Maryland State Board of Education.

23 The Maryland Freedom Board of Education, a majority youth based initiative, appears to
24 have been formed because young people, those most vested in the public education system, felt
25 that the officially recognized Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners is not performing
26 satisfactorily. Therefore the actions of the Freedom Board are valid in accordance with Article 6
27 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights that holds, in part: *That all persons invested with the*
28 *Legislative or Executive powers of Government are the Trustees of the Public, and, as such,*
29 *accountable for their conduct: Wherefore, whenever the ends of Government are perverted, and*
30 *public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress are ineffectual, the People*
31 *may, and of right ought, to reform the old, or establish a new Government; the doctrine of non-*
32 *resistance against arbitrary power and oppression is absurd, slavish and destructive of the good*
33 *and happiness of mankind.*

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

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1 In seeking to identify and resolve the many problems that affect our public school system we
2 must be willing to listen to all stakeholders. As a less popular African proverb holds, “He who
3 asks questions, cannot avoid the answers.”

4 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That members
5 of the Maryland Freedom Board of Education are invited to share with the City Council and the
6 general public information on the genesis of the organization, the specific funding and
7 programmatic goals to achieve parity in public education throughout Maryland, the action plan
8 for achieving the goals of the Board, and plans for the future advocacy agenda of the grassroots
9 organization.

10 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
11 Chair and Members of the Maryland Freedom Board of Education, the Members of the
12 Baltimore City Youth Commission, the President of the Baltimore NAACP, and the Mayor’s
13 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.