

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 09-0175R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Clarke, Henry, Middleton, Branch, Kraft, Young, Reisinger,
Holton, Conaway, Spector, Welch, Curran, D'Adamo

Introduced and read first time: December 10, 2009

Assigned to: Community Development Subcommittee

Committee Report: Favorable

Adopted: September 20, 2010

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

1 Informational Hearing - Baltimore Police Department - Police and Cyclists

2 FOR the purpose of inviting the Baltimore Police Commissioner to report to the City Council on
3 the Police Department's procedures for responding to incidents involving cyclists and the
4 Department's general approach to the bicycling community.

5 Recitals

6 In response to both improved cycling infrastructure in the City and individuals' desires to
7 make use of a healthy, inexpensive, and environmentally friendly transportation option, bicycle
8 use in Baltimore has been growing in popularity. Unfortunately, some of these cyclists are
9 occasionally involved in traffic accidents or other incidents that require police involvement.

10 When traffic incidents involving bicycles occur, cyclists frequently report that police officers
11 responding at the scene are unfamiliar with issues specific to bicycle involved accidents or that
12 officers are reluctant to file a report on accidents involving cyclists. Cyclists have also reported
13 that many officers seem unaware of all of the laws governing bicycle operation, sometimes
14 requiring riders to operate their bicycles in an unlawful manner or objecting to legal behaviors.

15 Together, these concerns have led to a too widespread perception in the cycling community
16 that the Baltimore Police Department is not responsive to its needs. This perception needs to be
17 addressed before it undermines the City's efforts to promote cycling as a way to improve the
18 health and safety of Baltimore's citizens.

19 Baltimore's 2006 *Bicycle Master Plan*, which guides the efforts to make the City more bike
20 friendly, included a number of specific measures that could be taken to improve the relationship
21 between the Police Department and the cycling community. These recommendations included:

- 22 ♦ training all officers about bicycle safety laws and the issues faced by on-street bicyclists;
- 23 ♦ providing special training to some officers who would then respond to bicycle involved
24 accidents;
- 25 ♦ increasing the emphasis on enforcing bicycle safety laws and identifying problem spots
26 for cyclists; and

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

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1 ♦ systematically filing reports on bicycle involved crashes to identify trends and find
2 problem areas that can be addressed through improved safety programs.

3 In order to ensure the success of the City’s efforts to promote cycling, it is increasingly
4 important that, as the number of cyclists grows, all stake holders be on the same page and aware
5 of each other’s concerns. A public discussion with the Police Department about its relations
6 with the cycling community at this juncture would therefore be helpful to the broader
7 implementation of the *Bicycle Master Plan*.

8 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
9 Baltimore Police Commissioner is invited to appear before the City Council to report on the
10 Police Department’s procedures for responding to incidents involving cyclists and what actions
11 the Department can take to improve relations with the cycling community by assisting in
12 implementing the *Bicycle Master Plan*.

13 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
14 Baltimore Police Commissioner, the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice, the
15 Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Committee, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.