

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0531
(First Reader)

Introduced by: Councilmember Kraft, President Young, Councilmembers Henry, Costello,
Branch, Holton, Scott, Middleton, Clarke, Spector, Reisinger, Curran, Stokes, Welch, Mosby
Introduced and read first time: May 4, 2015

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Planning, Department of
Real Estate, Department of Recreation and Parks

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 **City Property – Naming the Marble Fountain in Patterson Park to be the**
3 **Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Memorial Fountain**

4 FOR the purpose of naming the marble fountain in Patterson Park, located at the entrance on
5 Patterson Park Avenue at Lombard Street, adjacent to the property known as 27 South
6 Patterson Park Avenue, to be the Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Memorial Fountain.

7 BY authority of

8 Article 5 - Finance, Property, and Procurement

9 Section 20-2

10 Baltimore City Code

11 (Edition 2000)

12 **Recitals**

13 Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. was the first African American admitted to the Vanderbilt
14 School of Medicine, in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1968, at the time that Dr. Martin
15 Luther King, Jr. was murdered, he was still the only African American at that
16 medical school. In 1970, he graduated from Vanderbilt and was the first African
17 American to do so.

18 After graduation, he moved to Baltimore where he was the first African American
19 intern at Johns Hopkins University Medical School. From 1973 to 1975, he
20 studied at Harvard Medical School's Department of Physiology, performing
21 breakthrough research into the role of the renin angiotensin system in congestive
22 heart failure. When he returned to Johns Hopkins in 1975, he became the first
23 African American chief resident in heart surgery at the university.

24 At Johns Hopkins in 1980, he was a pioneer in performing the first implantation
25 of an automatic defibrillator, a small battery-powered device that detects
26 arrhythmia in the heart and emits an electric shock to correct it and which has
27 saved over a million lives in subsequent years.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

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1 Never forgetting his own experiences, as a member of the medical school's
2 admissions committee, he focused on correcting the racial inequality in the
3 student body. As a result of his efforts, by 1983, the number of African American
4 students at the Hopkins Medical School had increased fivefold to 40, compared to
5 the 8 students there in 1978.

6 Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. became a full professor of cardiac surgery in 1990. He was
7 awarded a medal of honor as an outstanding alumnus by Vanderbilt and received
8 honorary doctorates from Sojourner-Douglass College, Meharry Medical College,
9 Spelman College, and Morgan State University. In 2010, he was awarded the
10 Thurgood Marshall College Fund award for excellence in medicine.

11 He was also a great friend to Patterson Park and was a cofounder of the Park's
12 Wine-Tasting at Sunset Fundraiser, now in its 11th year. He was a long-time
13 supporter of the Friends of Patterson Park and an advocate for the importance of
14 youth recreation opportunities.

15 Baltimore, the greater society, and Patterson Park are better because of Dr. Levi
16 Watkins, Jr. Naming the marble fountain in his honor will keep him in our
17 memories for future generations.

18 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
19 marble fountain in Patterson Park, located at the entrance on Patterson Park Avenue at Lombard
20 Street, adjacent to the property known as 27 South Patterson Park Avenue, is named the Dr. Levi
21 Watkins, Jr. Memorial Fountain.

22 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the 30th day
23 after the date it is enacted.