

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 08-0035R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke, President Rawlings-Blake, Councilmembers D'Adamo, Henry, Young, Cole, Branch, Curran, Holton, Welch, Middleton, Conaway, Reisinger
At the request of: Advocates for Children and Youth
c/o Ken Strong, Deputy Director for External Affairs, 8 Market Place, 5th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Telephone: 410-547-8690
Introduced and read first time: April 14, 2008
Assigned to: Education Committee
Committee Report: Favorable
Adopted: April 28, 2008

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Maryland Can Do Better for Children ! – In Support of Advocates for Children and Youth

FOR the purpose of endorsing the goals and solutions of Advocates for Children and Youth for improving opportunities for young people and addressing specific deficits in the areas of education, health, and safety, by 2010; joining the *Maryland Can Do Better for Children!* campaign; and urging all policymakers throughout Maryland to join the Campaign and an *army for children* to secure for Maryland's youth the support services they need to thrive and excel.

Recitals

The Advocates for Children and Youth report that while Maryland is one of the wealthiest states in the nation, our children are only in the middle of the pack on areas such as education, health, and safety. The goal of the organization's *Maryland Can Do Better for Children!* campaign is to improve the outcomes in these areas and to open doors of opportunity for Maryland's young people, by 2010.

In joining the *Maryland Can Do Better for Children!* campaign and the *army for children*, the following specific goals and comprehensive solutions are endorsed:

- *Keep Kids Safely in Their Homes and Communities* by creating a continuum of community-based services so that abused, neglected, or delinquent children are not unnecessarily removed from their homes or placed in confinement;
- *Raise the Education Bar* by providing help to struggling students early, at the first signs of trouble with course work or behavior;
- *Create Permanent Homes Faster* by promoting child welfare case practice that builds family teams and links families with services that address underlying needs;

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

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- 1 • *Support Family Self-Sufficiency* by helping working families to be economically self-
2 sufficient and to have access to neighborhood-based primary prevention services;
- 3 • *Prevent Child Illness* by increasing access to preventive services that address dental
4 general physical, and mental health needs; and
- 5 • *Reduce Racial Disparities* by implementing strategies to reduce racial disparities in
6 child well-being, as identified by the Maryland Children’s Action Network at the
7 2007 Convention.

8 The Advocates for Children and Youth’s Summer 2007 Report Card documents that there
9 exists the 3rd largest gap nationally between Maryland’s wealth and the KIDS COUNT Child
10 Well-Being Indicators; that Maryland has the 2nd largest achievement gap in the nation for low-
11 income 4th graders and others in reading and math and that the gap is the 5th largest nationally
12 for 8th graders; that 70% of low-income children have no dental care; that of the nearly 10,000
13 children who have been removed from their parents home because of abuse and neglect, 27%, or
14 twice the number of a decade ago, are living in group homes; and there is a 53% recidivism rate
15 for youth confined in Maryland’s juvenile justice system 1 year after release – 62% recidivism
16 for those confined to secure residential programs.

17 Those who embrace the *Maryland Can Do Better for Children!* campaign are asked to sign a
18 pledge stating that “I want to do my part so that Maryland can transform itself to a national
19 model for children. I want to use my influence to persuade decision makers to improve
20 children’s lives.”

21 The Baltimore City Council joins the Advocates for Children and Youth in asserting that
22 *Maryland Can Do Better for Children!*, encourages other policy and decision makers to support
23 the goals and solutions of the organization, urges local, state, and federal elected officials to
24 ensure adequate funding to achieve those goals, and entreats all citizens of the State to provide
25 financial and volunteer services to improve education, health, and safety outcomes for Maryland’s
26 youth, by 2010.

27 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That this Body
28 hereby endorses the goals and solutions of Advocates for Children and Youth for improving
29 opportunities for young people and addressing specific deficits in the areas of education, health,
30 and safety, by 2010; joins the *Maryland Can Do Better for Children!* campaign; and urges all
31 policymakers throughout Maryland to join the Campaign and an *army for children* to secure for
32 Maryland’s youth the support services they need to thrive and excel.

33 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
34 Governor, the Maryland Delegation to the 110th Congress; the Baltimore City Senate and House
35 Delegations to the Maryland General Assembly, the Deputy Director for External Affairs,
36 Advocates for Children and Youth, the Baltimore City Health Commissioner, the Executive
37 Director of the Mayor’s Office of State Relations, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City
38 Council.