

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 06-0242R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Harris, Kraft, Holton, Curran, Reisinger, Clarke, Welch,
Conaway, Mitchell, Branch, Spector, D'Adamo
Introduced and read first time: December 7, 2006
Assigned to: Public Safety Subcommittee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Baltimore City Criminal Justice Coordinating Council,
Baltimore City Public School System, Department of Recreation and Parks, Mayor's Office of
Children, Youth, and Families, Youth Commission

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – Teen Killers/Teen Victims – An Alarming Trend**

3 FOR the purpose of examining the disturbing trend of increasing numbers of young people both
4 committing murder and becoming the victims of homicide, by requesting the Baltimore City
5 State's Attorney to share the results of a study by the Juvenile Division on the causes of
6 violence and victimization, calling on the Executive Director of the Baltimore City Criminal
7 Justice Coordinating Council to give an overview of juvenile offenders and victims, and
8 urging the CEO, Baltimore City Public School System, the Director, Baltimore City
9 Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Executive Director of the Office of Children,
10 Youth and Families to offer insights into the educational, behavioral, and social condition of
11 our Baltimore City youth.

12 **Recitals**

13 November 18: “**8th-Grader Charged in Girl's Killing – She was fatally stabbed Nov. 7**
14 **walking from the light rail station**”; November 19: “**Reporting Deaths of 2 Teens Caught in**
15 **a Tide of Violence**”; November 22: “**Camera Catches Homicide Suspect – Police use video**
16 **to identify teen in killing of man asleep on bench in West Baltimore**” – so ran the headlines
17 in local papers from Saturday to Wednesday, leading Baltimore parents of teens to give heartfelt
18 thanks that their kids were alive and well to join in family celebrations of the November 23rd
19 Thanksgiving holiday.

20 According to national statistics reported by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
21 Prevention and local information supplied by Baltimore City Police, a family that has not been
22 touched by juvenile crime is, indeed, fortunate. Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National
23 Report states that homicide is one of the leading causes of juvenile death in the United States and
24 that, on average, between 1980 and 2002, about 2,000 juveniles were murdered annually. The
25 National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and
26 Prevention reports that homicide was the 4th leading cause of death for children ages 1-11 in
27 2002, and the 3rd leading cause of death for juveniles ages 12-17.

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

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1 Statistics reported by local law enforcement, however, point to the sobering fact that the
2 Baltimore City teen murder and victimization rate eclipses the national trend. In just this past
3 year, the number of juveniles slain – 21 people ages 17 and under – far exceeds last year’s total
4 of 13, the lowest since 1984. Also, tragically, a total of 21 young people under 18 have been
5 charged in killings in the City so far this year, nearly doubling the total number of those charged
6 in all of 2005. According to information reportedly released by the Office of the State’s
7 Attorney, 8 of those charged are 15-year-olds.

8 The spate of juvenile committing killings has prompted exigent action by the State’s
9 Attorney who released a statement on November 21 that read, in part:

10 “The increasing number of juveniles charged as adults in homicide cases in Baltimore are
11 cause for great community concern – not only because of the chilling facts outlined in
12 these allegations, and the public safety concerns that these cases highlight, but also
13 because a new profile is emerging, that of a younger, more violent offender, who has
14 evaded many of the traditional assessments and treatment opportunities for early
15 intervention and prevention of high-risk behaviors.

16 This emerging profile must be assessed and analyzed by all of our juvenile justice
17 and social service agencies and allied educational organizations with a unified
18 goal to stop this wave of violence and victimization to our fragile, youthful
19 generation.

20 Today I contacted several law enforcement and community partners to meet with me to
21 review new trends and factors that need immediate attention and understanding. Over the
22 next week, I will convene a series of meetings to discuss my observations, assessments
23 and analysis of the facts. I have requested a detailed analysis of key indicators in the
24 murder cases in 2006. I moved today to re-assign staff to conduct our assessment.

25 Over the next several weeks I will keep the community informed regarding the scope and
26 content of our meetings and the policy issues that need to be addressed so that together
27 we can build a safer Baltimore for our future generations.”

28 The information compiled as a result of the State’s Attorney’s investigation will present
29 insight into the circumstances that lead to so many of our youth becoming victims and
30 victimizing others. In inviting the agencies to share in the investigation, the Council will expand
31 understanding of a troubling phenomenon that is added to the many negative influences that our
32 children must have our unmitigated commitment to successfully overcome.

33 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
34 Body will fully examine the disturbing trend of increasing numbers of young people both
35 committing murder and becoming the victims of homicide, by requesting the Baltimore City
36 State’s Attorney to share the results of a study by the Juvenile Division on the causes of violence
37 and victimization, by calling on the Executive Director, Baltimore City Criminal Justice
38 Coordinating Council to give an overview of juvenile offenders and victims, and by urging the
39 CEO, Baltimore City Public School System, the Director, Baltimore City Department of
40 Recreation and Parks, and the Executive Director of the Office of Children, Youth and Families
41 to offer insights into the educational, behavioral, and social condition of our Baltimore City
42 youth.

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1 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
2 Baltimore City State’s Attorney, the Executive Director, Baltimore City Coordinating Council
3 on Criminal Justice, the CEO, Baltimore City Public School System, the Director, Baltimore
4 City Department of Recreation and Parks, the Executive Director, Office of Children, Youth, and
5 Families, and the Youth Commission.