

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0204R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Stokes, President Young, Councilmembers Middleton, Costello,
Scott, Mosby, Curran, Branch, Henry, Welch, Clarke, Reisinger

Introduced and read first time: February 23, 2015

Assigned to: Taxation, Finance and Economic Development Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Visit Baltimore, Department of Finance, Baltimore
Development Corporation, Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Establishing a Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment &**
3 **Heritage Preservation Commission**

4 FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from Baltimore’s tourism, entertainment, business,
5 and heritage preservation communities to meet with the Baltimore City Council in a hearing
6 to determine how best to fashion and establish a Baltimore City African American Business,
7 Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission, and to seek a source of
8 designated funding for the Commission.

9 **Recitals**

10 Baltimore City is the birthplace and home to many of America’s greatest African American
11 public servants and national icons. Baltimore City has literally hundreds of historic sites that are
12 in desperate need of increased awareness and appreciation, and in many cases in need of
13 immediate preservation efforts, and should be recognized as national and local historic sites of
14 interest to the citizens of the State of Maryland and to the nation’s domestic and international
15 tourism and preservation communities. Additionally, many of these sites are cared for by the
16 nonprofit community to which funding sources are not widely known or readily available.

17 Historic anniversaries are another item of concern as Baltimore continues to celebrate and
18 commemorate its history and heritage of certain individuals and dates and seemingly overlook or
19 not have awareness of the other neglected and too often overlooked historic events that occurred
20 in Baltimore City.

21 A Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage
22 Preservation Commission, properly staffed and funded, can alleviate this oversight and ensure
23 that this essential part of Baltimore’s history and heritage is not lost or forgotten, which deprives
24 present citizens, and, if not corrected, future generations of the knowledge of the achievements
25 and contributions of people of African American descent to Baltimore’s diverse history.
26 Representatives from Baltimore’s tourism, entertainment, business, and heritage preservation
27 communities could work together on the commission to research, identify, catalog, link, preserve
28 the history of Baltimore’s African American community, and to share these findings with
29 interested persons and organizations and with the nation’s tourism industry as well as with
30 tourism agencies of the City of Baltimore and the State of Maryland.

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

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1 Baltimore City remains a city of two distinct and unconnected locales. On one side of town
2 there are multi-million dollar districts and destinations, multi-million dollar tourism sites,
3 multi-million dollar Inner Harbor attractions and businesses including the National Aquarium,
4 MD Science Center, Phillips Seafood, Spirit Cruises, Barnes & Noble, Bubba Gump, M&T Bank
5 Stadium, Oriole Park at Camden Yards, Baltimore Horseshoe Casino, Harbor East, Fell's Point,
6 Federal Hill, Mt. Vernon Cultural District, Power Plant Live, etc.

7 Yet, there are tourism deserts in Baltimore, historic sites are situated in tourist un-friendly
8 locales, markers, plaques and signs are missing from historic buildings and districts, historic sites
9 are facing deteriorating conditions, in need of landscaping, beautification, etc. These adverse
10 conditions have a negative impact on the communities in which they exist and thus limit
11 opportunities for Baltimore small businesses to engage in the City's \$3-5 billion tourism industry
12 and restricts the ability of local artists and craftsmen to generate revenue and serve as pillars and
13 positive influences in their own communities.

14 More could, and should, be done to celebrate and highlight the full range of what Baltimore
15 has to offer from it's rich history and cultural heritage. Establishing an African American
16 Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission would be an important
17 step towards this goal.

18 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
19 Council calls on representatives from Baltimore's tourism, entertainment, business, and heritage
20 preservation communities to meet with the Baltimore City Council in a hearing to determine how
21 best to fashion and establish a Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism,
22 Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission, and to seek a source of designated funding
23 for the Commission.

24 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
25 President & CEO of Visit Baltimore, the Director of Finance, the President of the Baltimore
26 African American Tourism Council, the Executive Director of Baltimore Heritage, the Executive
27 Director of Preservation Maryland, the President & CEO of the Baltimore Development
28 Corporation, the President of the Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts, and the Mayor's
29 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.