

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 09-0125R  
(Resolution)**

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

Introduced and read first time: March 30, 2009

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

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REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Planning Department

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A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Baltimore City Council Complete Count Coordination**

3 FOR the purpose of exploring how the Baltimore City Council can best assist the Administration  
4 in securing an accurate population count in the 2010 Census, determining Council district  
5 organization, and identifying focus groups.

6 **Recitals**

7 The Leadership Conference of Civil Rights, the nation’s oldest and largest civil rights  
8 coalition, founded in 1950, reports that despite more resources and better planning, the 2000  
9 census missed more than 3 million people. Low-income communities, particularly low-income  
10 communities of color, were disproportionately undercounted in the census. As a result, many  
11 individuals were denied an equal voice in their government (since legislative districts are drawn  
12 based on decennial census data), and many communities were shortchanged on federal and state  
13 funding for schools, crime prevention, health care, and transportation.

14 The Conference found that there are several reasons for the persistent and disproportionate  
15 undercount of people of color and low-income people, including:

- 16 • lower response rates for mail and door-to-door collection methods in lower-income  
17 areas;
- 18 • lower education levels, illiteracy, and difficulty with the English language, affecting  
19 the ability of many individuals to understand the census;
- 20 • a general misunderstanding of the importance of census participation in these  
21 communities; and
- 22 • a distrust or suspicion of government, leading to a fear that census responses may be  
23 used by immigration or law enforcement officials to deport or incarcerate or may  
24 disqualify one for social welfare programs.

25 Low-income people, people of color, children, immigrants, people with disabilities, and  
26 people living in urban areas are most likely to be undercounted. In contrast, college students  
27 living away from home, people who own more than one home, non-Hispanic whites, suburban

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

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1 residents, and higher-income people are more likely to be counted twice, leading to an over  
2 counting of these populations. An accurate census directly affects our nation’s ability to ensure  
3 equal representation and equal access to important government resources for all Americans and  
4 thus must be regarded as one of the most significant civil rights issues facing the country today.

5 Statistics from the *Baltimore City Health Status Report 2008* show that population trends  
6 in Baltimore City put the City in danger of being undercounted, once again:

- 7 • Nearly two-thirds of City residents are African American, and nearly one third are  
8 white;
- 9 • Over the past decade and a half, the proportion of black Baltimore City residents has  
10 increased by 8%, and the proportion of white residents has decreased by 17%;
- 11 • While the classification of Asian race changed from the 1990 to the 2000 census, the  
12 proportion of Asian Baltimore City residents has increased by at least 90%; and
- 13 • Comparing 1990 to 2007, the proportion of the population who were of Hispanic  
14 ethnicity has more than doubled – comprising 1% of the population in 1990 and 2.5%  
15 in 2007.

16 According to recently released Census Bureau estimates, Baltimore’s population decreased  
17 by 3,506 people during the year that ended July 1, 2007 to 637,455, a number that City officials  
18 plan to challenge, as in the past several years. The initial 2006 estimate was 631,366, the  
19 adjusted estimate after appeal is 640,961 – although, the market analysis group, *Social Compact*,  
20 estimates Baltimore’s population at 663,717, or about 23,000 more people than the Census  
21 reported.

22 To ensure an accurate count in 2010, the Administration is implementing a Complete Count  
23 Committee comprising all City agencies and made up of subcommittees: Faith-Based;  
24 Education; Disabilities and Special Needs; Elderly; Immigration and Limited English  
25 Proficiency; New Baltimoreans; Nonprofit & Community-Based Organizations; Public Housing;  
26 Group Quarters; Media; Business; and Homeless.

27 Officials from the Department of Planning that staff the Committee welcome interaction with  
28 the City Council because of the extensive knowledge members have of their home districts and  
29 their constituencies.

30 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the  
31 Baltimore City Council will explore how to best assist the Administration in securing an accurate  
32 population count in the 2010 Census by determining Council district organization, and  
33 identifying focus groups.

34 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
35 Director, Department of Planning, the Chair of the Complete Count Committee, and the Mayor’s  
36 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.