

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0035R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Schleifer

Cosponsored by: President Cohen and Councilmembers Parker, Dorsey, Conway, Gray, Bullock,
Porter, Blanchard, Jones, Ramos, Torrence, and Glover

Introduced and read first time: October 20, 2025

Assigned to: Committee on Legislative Investigations

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Register of Wills, Circuit Court for Baltimore City,
Department of General Services, Office of the City Administrator

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Safekeeping and Storage of Baltimore City Wills**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting the Register of Wills, the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore
4 City, the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the Director of the Department
5 of General Services, and the City Administrator to appear before the City Council to discuss
6 the current space allocated to store wills in the Clarence J. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse, the lack
7 of fire and flood protection in said storage space, and the need to digitize and protect the 100
8 years of wills being stored in a room in the aging courthouse.

9 **Recitals**

10 Pursuant to § 2-208 {“Powers and duties of register”} of the Estates and Trusts Article of the
11 Annotated Code of Maryland, the Register of Wills “shall receive, file, and store safely every
12 original paper and record left in the register’s custody, in a repository of the courthouse as the
13 court may direct”. Further, § 2-208 states that “[t]he County Commissioners, County Council, or
14 the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore shall provide and keep in repair the repository at its
15 expense”.

16 The Register of Wills is currently unable to securely store documents filed with the Court due
17 to inadequate storage space. The Courthouse also lacks fire and flood protection, putting wills
18 dating back to 100 years ago and other historical documents at risk.

19 Currently, Baltimore City is the only large jurisdiction in the State of Maryland that does not
20 provide a fire resistant and water resistant repository for original Last Will and Testaments. To
21 properly secure these vital documents, the Register of Wills needs proper historical space to
22 serve the residents of Baltimore City and fulfill their statutory duties.

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

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1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the City
2 Council invites the Register of Wills, the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the Chief
3 Judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the Director of the Department of General
4 Services, and the City Administrator to appear before the City Council to discuss the current
5 space allocated to store wills in the Clarence J. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse, the lack of fire and
6 flood protection in said storage space, and the need to digitize and protect the 100 years of wills

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1 being stored in a room in the aging courthouse.

2 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Register of
3 Wills, the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court for
4 Baltimore City, the Director of the Department of General Services, the City Administrator, and
5 the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.