

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 11-0294R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Reisinger, President Young, Councilmembers Middleton,
Branch, Cole, Kraft, Spector, Welch, Conaway, Clarke, D’Adamo, Curran, Henry, Holton
Introduced and read first time: June 13, 2011

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Police Commissioner, Department of
Housing and Community Development, Health Department

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing - Nuisance Abatement Tools**

3 FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from the agencies involved with criminal nuisance
4 abatement to appear before the City Council to discuss best practices in criminal nuisance
5 abatement, inform the Council about how various nuisance abatement strategies and tools
6 work, and establish mechanisms to better coordinate the use of nuisance abatement tools
7 Citywide.

8 **Recitals**

9 Many otherwise peaceful neighborhoods contain one or two places that consistently attract a
10 criminal element of one sort or another. If the activities at these sites are allowed to continue
11 unchecked, these pockets of unlawfulness can eventually spread their blight throughout entire
12 blocks as regular citizens are pushed out. However, if instead these problem areas are quickly
13 dealt with, neighborhoods can be preserved and restored with comparatively minimal effort.

14 Recognizing this, both the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore have independently
15 created a number of legal tools to address these chronically criminal, “nuisance”, locations.
16 Some of these tools include State laws criminalizing the keeping of a “common nuisance” and
17 City laws relating to “public nuisances” or “neighborhood nuisances”. When and where these
18 tools are effectively employed the results can be dramatic.

19 Unfortunately, knowledge of what options are available to deal with these nuisances, and
20 how to best use these legal tools, is not spread equally throughout the City. Some districts make
21 little use of these laws, while others have had great success with them and have staff specifically
22 devoted to dealing with nuisance locations.

23 In order to take full advantage of the opportunities to nip neighborhood decline in the bud
24 through the use of nuisance abatement strategies, these strategies should be discussed and shared
25 amongst and within the various agencies and stakeholders who may be able to make use of them.
26 The City Council as a whole should also be familiarized with the different nuisance abatement
27 processes so that Councilmembers can assist constituents concerned about the appearance of one
28 of these pockets of criminality in their area to best make use of the City’s resources to preserve
29 their neighborhoods.

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

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1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
2 Council calls on representatives from the agencies involved with criminal nuisance abatement to
3 appear before it to discuss best practices in criminal nuisance abatement, inform the Council
4 about how various nuisance abatement strategies and tools work, and establish mechanisms to
5 better coordinate the use of nuisance abatement tools Citywide.

6 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
7 Police Commissioner, the Housing Commissioner, the Health Commissioner, and the Mayor's
8 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.