

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 16-0308R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Young, Councilmembers Scott, Curran, Holton, Henry, Branch

Introduced and read first time: June 23, 2016

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, Police Department, Fire Department, Mayor's Office of Information Technology

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – 911 Outage**

3 FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from Verizon and the agencies involved in the
4 operation of Baltimore's 911 system to appear before the City Council to discuss why the 911
5 system failed for 2 hours on June 14th, 2016, how they intend to prevent similar incidents in
6 the future, and how the City's emergency services can continue to keep Baltimore safe in the
7 event of any future failures in the 911 system.

8 **Recitals**

9 For roughly 2 hours on Tuesday, June 14th, all calls to the City's 911 system were erroneously
10 routed to an unmanned call center, leaving callers unable to reach emergency assistance. It is not
11 yet clear how many calls were affected, but even one life needlessly endangered would be one
12 too many.

13 During the outage, callers were reportedly greeted with a message saying "Baltimore City
14 emergency center, all operators are busy. Your call will be answered in turn. Please do not hang
15 up." Without a working 911 system, these Baltimoreans had no way of obtaining vital police
16 protection, fire suppression, or medical care, and had no way of knowing that they were not in
17 fact close to obtaining the assistance that they desperately needed.

18 This is, unfortunately, not an entirely isolated incident, but instead comes amidst other recent
19 problems with the 911 system. After years of confidence in the 911 system, citizens throughout
20 the City have recently and increasingly complained that 911 is no longer the "fail-proof" system
21 they had believed in for so long. This is a significant and inexcusable failure in our public safety
22 system which must be urgently and effectively addressed.

23 It's vital that the public and the Council be fully apprised of what went wrong on June 14th,
24 how the City and its service provider for the 911 system, Verizon, intend to prevent similar
25 incidents in the future, and how the City's emergency services can continue to keep Baltimore
26 safe in the event of any future failures in the 911 system.

27 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
28 Council calls on representatives from Verizon and the agencies involved in the operation of
29 Baltimore's 911 system to appear before it to discuss why the 911 system failed for 2 hours on

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

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1 June 14th, 2016, how they intend to prevent similar incidents in the future, and how the City's
2 emergency services can continue to keep Baltimore safe in the event of any future failures in the
3 911 system.

4 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
5 Director of the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, the Police Commissioner, the Fire
6 Chief, Verizon's Maryland Vice President for State Government Affairs, and the Mayor's
7 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.