

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 09-0154R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Welch, Kraft, D'Adamo, Middleton, Branch, Spector,
Reisinger, Conaway, Holton, Henry, Clarke, President Rawlings-Blake
Introduced and adopted: September 1, 2009

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Congratulations *Visit Baltimore!*

FOR the purpose of congratulating BACVA on changing its name to Visit Baltimore;
commending the members of the association on its many tourism sales and marketing
accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2009; and applauding the past accomplishments and future
successes the change heralds.

Recitals

On July 30, 2009, the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association (BACVA) issued
a press release at its annual meeting, announcing that the organization had changed its name to
Visit Baltimore, in step with the industry standard to have a name that reflects the association's
mission, is easily identifiable with Baltimore and the association's role as the official sales and
marketing organization that generates economic benefits for stakeholders through the attraction
of convention, group, and leisure visitors.

Visit Baltimore officials predict that the name change "will better position the destination in
this increasingly competitive marketplace and make it easier for potential travelers to find us".
In the past, although tourism is a \$3 billion industry in Baltimore, very few locals or visitors
were aware of BACVA, much less its mission. The name change clearly identifies both the
genesis and the mission of the association – other city bureaus that have taken this strategic step
include Destination D.C., Visit Charlotte, Positively Cleveland, Choose Chicago, Meet
Minneapolis, Visit Tampa Bay, Go to Louisville, Visit Pittsburgh, and Visit Milwaukee.

Also unveiled on the occasion of announcement of the name change were the key
accomplishments for FY 2009 that include:

- booked a high of 522,541 room nights for future years, marking a 15.7% increase
over the previous year. This is the 5th consecutive year that sales bookings have
increased.
- Achieved a record \$10.9 million in advertising equivalency through public relations
efforts, including segments on the CBS Early Show and hosting the NBC travel editor
for a live 3-hour radio show. This marks a 34% increase in free media coverage for
Baltimore over last year.
- Leveraged social media channels into marketing efforts and became first destination
in the country to generate 3,000 followers on Twitter.
- Launched the Certified Tourism Ambassadors Program and trained more than 730
frontline employees to assist visitors in enhancing their trip to Baltimore.

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

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- 1 • Launched “Expect the Unexpected” campaign in new geographic markets to expand
2 the reach of Baltimore’s tourism message.
- 3 • Achieved designation as an accredited destination management organization by
4 demonstrating expert proficiency in meeting standards for performances and
5 measurements, utilizing best practices and techniques, and providing excellent
6 service. This is a prestigious designation issued by the Destination Marketing
7 Association International, the governing body of convention and visitor bureaus
8 around the world.

9 In Fiscal Year 2010, Visit Baltimore plans to extend and form new strategic partnerships
10 with leading meeting industry associations; build upon marketing and public relations programs
11 for niche markets; launch a new magazine-style visitor publication; promote a new online
12 booking engine that allows visitors to bundle tickets, hotel reservations, and other services; and
13 conduct quarterly business roundtables for the leadership associations to meet in Baltimore and
14 network with peers.

15 The Baltimore City Council is proud to have such an innovative and exemplary association
16 leading the charge to encourage the rest of the world to *Visit* Baltimore!

17 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
18 Body congratulates BACVA on changing its name to Visit Baltimore; commends the members
19 of the association on its many tourism sales and marketing accomplishments for Fiscal Year
20 2009; and applauds the past accomplishments and future successes the change heralds.

21 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
22 President and CEO of Visit Baltimore, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.