

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 08-0040R
(Resolution)**

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

Introduced and read first time: April 28, 2008

Assigned to: Public Safety and Health Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Police Commissioner, Department of
Finance

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing - False Alarm Reduction Program**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting that the Baltimore City Police Commissioner and officials of
4 Affiliated Computer Services, Inc., brief the Council on the current status of false alarms in
5 Baltimore City, update the Council as to whether the current fees imposed for false alarms
6 have helped reduce the number of false alarms in Baltimore City, and discuss the current
7 contract situation for the False Alarm Reduction Program.

8 **Recitals**

9 On November 4, 2002, the Board of Estimates gave approval to the provisions of City
10 Council Ordinance 02-329 that required all burglar alarm users and businesses, defined as those
11 that monitor, install, or sell alarms, to be registered by the City. Since then, residents of
12 Baltimore City who have burglar alarm systems in their homes have been obligated to pay false
13 alarm fees when it is found that an alarm has falsely gone off in their home more than twice in a
14 12-month period. These residents were also obligated to pay an initial \$20 registration fee to be
15 enrolled in the False Alarm Reduction Program. This fee is a mandatory registration fee for all
16 alarm users in Baltimore City. This program has apparently cut down on the number of false
17 alarms that were creating issues for communities, as well as the police officers trying to keep
18 those communities safe.

19 If there has been a significant drop in the false alarms, then there may be no need to continue
20 charging registration fees to alarm users that currently have alarms that work properly and who
21 already pay alarm fees to companies that provide alarm services. The City's current contract,
22 with Affiliated Computer Services, Inc., is set to terminate on November 1, 2008. Prior to this
23 termination date, there is the option for the City to extend the contract for another 3 years.

24 This informational hearing should provide answers to questions that remain regarding the
25 status of the False Alarm Reduction Program and allow the City Council to be informed as to the
26 inner workings of the program in order to help make the decisions as to what the next steps in
27 maintaining the program should be. Whether the citizens of Baltimore City should have to
28 continue to pay the registration fee for their alarms is an important one. In the current climate of
29 heightened expenses, the City of Baltimore should be trying to help City residents by releasing
30 them from the obligations to pay potentially unnecessary fees. If the False Alarm Reduction

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

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1 Program has accomplished its goals, then the registration fees are no longer a necessary
2 component to reducing false alarms, and the program should be altered to suit the current needs
3 of Baltimore City residents.

4 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
5 Body requests that the Commissioner of the Baltimore City Police Department and officials of
6 Affiliated Computer Services, Inc., brief the Council on the current status of false alarms in
7 Baltimore City, update the Council as to whether the current fees imposed for false alarms have
8 helped reduce the number of false alarms in Baltimore City, and discuss the current contract
9 situation for the False Alarm Reduction Program.

10 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
11 Police Commissioner, the Finance Director, officials of Affiliated Computer Services, the
12 organizations of the Planning Department's Community Association Directory, and the Mayor's
13 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.