

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0208R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Branch, Kraft, Stokes, Henry, President Young,

Councilmembers Middleton, Clarke, Welch, Curran, Scott, Mosby, Holton

Introduced and read first time: March 9, 2015

Assigned to: Public Safety Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Police Department

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Eye Pledge**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting the Police Commissioner and community leaders from the 13th
4 District to appear before the Council to discuss the establishment of a pilot partnership
5 between the Police Department and the community to improve neighborhood conditions
6 through the “Eye Pledge” campaign.

7 **Recitals**

8 Even in the most violent and troubled neighborhoods the positive people trying to build a life
9 for themselves, their families, and their community far outnumber the bad elements holding the
10 neighborhood back. But the greater visibility and aggressiveness of the small number of
11 troublemakers can make it feel difficult for everyday people to work together to make positive
12 changes.

13 In the 13th District, some are working on a new effort – the “Eye Pledge” campaign – to make
14 it easier for local residents to overcome this problem and work more effectively together with
15 each other and neighborhood police officers to improve the community.

16 Participants in the campaign would sign a pledge with the following 11 specific promises:

17 A. I pledge to keep my property clean.

18 B. I pledge to watch my neighbor’s property if I am home and report any unusual activity
19 to the police.

20 C. I pledge to report any illegal loitering in the neighborhood to police.

21 D. I pledge to get a police block watcher’s number.

22 E. I pledge to support the community association group of my community.

23 F. I pledge to work along with my neighbors to bring positive changes to the community.

24 G. I pledge to respect all government employees and expect the same in return.

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

Council Bill 15-0208R

1 H. I pledge to report illegal dumping of bulk trash/debris to 311 or to the district
2 Councilmember’s office.

3 I. I pledge to write down a description of what someone wears and/or drives if and when
4 a crime is being committed and report it to the police.

5 J. I pledge to report the color, description, and location of illegal dirt bikes and drivers
6 to the police.

7 K. I pledge to allow the police to challenge anyone loitering on my property or vehicle.

8 This pledge would be signed by the property owner or renter, as well as the neighborhood
9 service police officer for the district, and a representative from the district’s Councilmember’s
10 office. Participants would then be given a distinctive decal to display on the outside of their
11 property as well as an opportunity to provide the names of people who should legitimately be on
12 their property.

13 The benefits of the “Eye Pledge” program would be twofold. First, community members
14 would be able to look around and see a visual reinforcement of the fact that most of their
15 neighbors were indeed dedicated to the same beneficial goals as they are, and that they are not
16 alone in trying to uplift the community. Second, the criminal element in the area would get a
17 very visible message that they are not welcome, while community police officers would get a
18 valuable tool they could use to disperse loiterers without having to involve residents in a
19 confrontational discussion about whether or not a person not listed as approved for a property is
20 actually supposed to be there.

21 The “Eye Pledge” campaign would be a partnership between the community and the Police
22 Department that could make a real difference. But in order to succeed it will need widespread
23 support in targeted communities as well as effort and understanding from engaged community
24 based police officers. Discussions of the concept and how it could best be implemented in an
25 open and public hearing before the Council would be an important momentum building step for
26 the “Eye Pledge” effort.

27 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
28 Council invites the Police Commissioner and community leaders from the 13th District to appear
29 before it to discuss the establishment of a pilot partnership between the Police Department and
30 the community to improve neighborhood conditions through the “Eye Pledge” campaign.

31 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
32 Police Commissioner, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.