

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 12-0057R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Clarke, Stokes, President Young, Councilmembers Mosby,
Henry, Spector, Middleton, Cole, Holton, Kraft, Scott, Curran, Welch, Reisinger, Branch
Introduced and read first time: June 18, 2012

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing - Establishing the Baltimore City African-American Civil Rights**
3 **Historic Commission**

4 FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from Baltimore's civil rights, historical, and
5 cultural institutions to meet with the City Council in a hearing to determine how best to
6 fashion and establish a Baltimore City African-American Civil Rights Historic Commission
7 whose mission is to catalog, preserve, link, and promote the many resources memorializing
8 the pioneering civil rights struggle which occurred in Baltimore City in the 1950's and 60's,
9 the significant benchmarks achieved of both local and national importance, and the
10 continuing struggle to finish the work begun.

11 **Recitals**

12 Baltimore City has historically played a pivotal and pioneering role in our nation's civil rights
13 struggle. Many of the struggle's national leaders were raised in our City, led congregations in
14 our City, or formed alliances with Baltimore's pioneering leaders. Numerous precedent-setting
15 legal challenges originated here which reached the highest courts in the land and won some of the
16 earliest decisions in the nation against discrimination and segregation. Tactics, methods, and
17 philosophies which came to characterize the national civil rights movement were tested and
18 refined in the 1950's and early 1960's in Baltimore by local leaders who went on to mentor and
19 join forces with other emerging national civil rights leaders.

20 As time passes, however, this rich history and legacy are in danger of being forgotten as if too
21 long ago and far away to matter, to celebrate, or to inspire new generations to carry on the work
22 still undone. Each generation needs to know and appreciate, for example, the significance of such
23 Baltimore-related legal cases as *Williams v. Zimmerman*, *Kerr v. Enoch Pratt*, *McCready v. Byrd*,
24 *Bell v. Maryland*, *Morgan v. Virginia*, *Mills v. Lowndes*, *Griffin v. Maryland*, and *Murray v*
25 *Pearson*. Each generation needs to meet anew Baltimore's impressive roster of civil rights
26 heroes and heroines, including:

- 27
- Thurgood Marshall
 - 28 • Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr.
 - 29 • Donald Murray
 - 30 • Juanita Jackson Mitchell
 - 31 • Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson

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

Council Bill 12-0057R

- 1 • Carl Murphy
- 2 • Enolia P. McMillan
- 3 • W.A.C. Hughes, Jr.
- 4 • Esther McCready
- 5 • Walter Lively
- 6 • Walter P. Carter
- 7 • Chester Wickwire
- 8 • Gloria Richardson
- 9 • John Preentiss Poe
- 10 • Clarence Logan
- 11 • Rabbi Morris Lieberman
- 12 • Edward A. Chance
- 13 • Rev. Douglas Sands
- 14 • The ‘Goon Squad’
- 15 • Rev. Dr. Marion Bascom
- 16 • Rev. Harvey Johnson
- 17 • Attorney Everett J. Wating
- 18 • Homer Favor
- 19 • Parren J. Mitchell
- 20 • Samuel Daniels
- 21 • William ‘Little Willie’ Adams
- 22 • Louise Kerr
- 23 • Robert Watts
- 24 • Furman Templeton

25 As in the civil rights movement itself, Baltimore has indeed taken the lead in creating
26 prominent institutions and advocacy groups which have worked admirably, against all odds, to
27 undertake the tasks of preserving and promoting Baltimore’s African-American civil rights
28 history, including its landmarks, artifacts, pioneers, and documentation. The call of this
29 resolution, however, is to ensure that these singular achievements find common ground through
30 coordination, cataloging, even “mapping” and closing gaps so that all this remarkable work is
31 somehow comprehensive in capturing the accounts of our elders, while time permits; available to
32 inspire our future generations; and, accessible as a whole through its many facets.

33 It is especially fitting to issue this call and begin this conversation in earnest today, June 18,
34 2012, which is the 77th anniversary of one of the most pivotal moments in Baltimore civil rights
35 history, that is, the date of the opening arguments in *Murray v. Pearson*. On this date in 1935,
36 two young attorneys, Thurgood Marshall and Clarence Mitchell, Jr., stood in the Baltimore
37 courtroom of Judge Eugene O’Dunne and argued that Donald Gaines Murray, a lifelong
38 Baltimore resident, should be allowed to begin his journey to join them in the legal profession –
39 and to do so as a Black – by attending the University of Maryland despite its policy of admitting
40 only whites. The long journey of this legal challenge ended at last when Maryland’s highest
41 court ordered Donald Murray’s admission into the University of Maryland Law School, and that
42 case became the first successful school desegregation case of any kind in the United States – and
43 the first step on the even longer journey of ending legal segregation throughout this nation.

44 Let us do justice to leaders and achievements like this by undertaking the pioneering work,
45 ourselves, of collaboration in keeping alive and available what they did, and who they were, and
46 how the carrying-on requires the knowledge and inspiration we can, together, provide.

Council Bill 12-0057R

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
2 Council supports the work and resources required to establish the proposed Baltimore City
3 African-American Civil Rights Historic Commission should that proposed Commission be
4 approved in principle by those who convene to and deliberate with City Council on the need for
5 such a Commission and to offer help in formulating its mission, formation and governance under
6 law.

7 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the leaders of
8 Baltimore’s civil rights, historical, and cultural institutions, the Mayor, and the Mayor’s
9 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.