

CITY OF BALTIMORE
ORDINANCE _____
Council Bill 17-0154

Introduced by: Councilmember Costello, President Young, Councilmembers Scott, Henry,
Pinkett, Dorsey, Burnett, Middleton, Stokes, Sneed, Clarke, Reisinger, Bullock

Introduced and read first time: October 16, 2017

Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

Committee Report: Favorable

Council action: Adopted

Read second time: December 4, 2017

AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING

1 City Property – Naming the Building, Informally Known as the
2 MECU Building, to be the Councilman Harry S. Cummings Building

3 FOR the purpose of naming the building located at 401 East Fayette Street, informally known as
4 the MECU Building, the Councilman Harry S. Cummings Building.

5 BY authority of

6 Article 5 - Finance, Property, and Procurement

7 Section 20-2

8 Baltimore City Code

9 (Edition 2000)

10 Recitals

11 Harry Sythe Cummings, Baltimore’s first African-American Councilman, was
12 born in Baltimore’s Eleventh Ward, in 1866, and educated in Baltimore’s public
13 schools. In 1886, he graduated from Lincoln University, an institution of higher
14 learning that was then known as the “Black Princeton” because of its Princeton-
15 educated founder, its early faculty, and its rigorous classical curriculum. He then
16 graduated from the University of Maryland Law School, in 1889, one of the first
17 two African-Americans to do so.

18 His political career commenced in 1890, when he was elected to City Council
19 from the Ward in which he was born. At that time, each Councilman selected a
20 candidate for a full scholarship to the Maryland Institute. Harry Cummings
21 selected Harry S. Pratt, an African-American. Maryland Institute refused to honor
22 Pratt’s scholarship, and Cummings then prevailed in the courts on behalf of this
23 young man.

24 He was also known as the Father of Colored Polytechnic, for his efforts in
25 promoting the establishment of the high school.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
Underlining indicates matter added to the bill by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by
amendment or deleted from existing law by amendment.

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1 Although reelected in 1891, he lost in 1892, and was reelected in 1897. After that
2 term expired, he practiced law and was later elected to a 4-year term in 1907,
3 1911, and again in 1915. In an era of intense racial discrimination, he worked
4 hard on behalf of his constituents. It is fitting that a building be named to honor
5 his accomplishment as the first African-American member of the Baltimore City
6 Council.

7 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the
8 building located at 401 East Fayette Street, informally known as the MECU Building, is named
9 the Councilman Harry S. Cummings Building.

10 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED**, That this Ordinance takes effect on the 30th day
11 after the date it is enacted.

Certified as duly passed this _____ day of _____, 20__

President, Baltimore City Council

Certified as duly delivered to Her Honor, the Mayor,
this _____ day of _____, 20__

Chief Clerk

Approved this _____ day of _____, 20__

Mayor, Baltimore City