

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 05-0090R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Harris, President Dixon, Councilmembers Young, Kraft, Holton,
Welch, Conaway, Reisinger, Clarke, Rawlings Blake, Mitchell, Branch
Introduced and read first time: September 26, 2005
Assigned to: Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee

Committee Report: Favorable
Adopted: March 6, 2006

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

**The 21st Century Commission
on African American Males in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area**

FOR the purpose of re-convening the Commission on African American Males to assess the current health, welfare, social, and spiritual condition of African American males in the Baltimore metropolis, to determine the progress made in the decade since the formation of the 1995 Mayor's Commission on African American Males, to identify issues that must be addressed to guarantee the comprehensive forward movement of African American males in decades to come, to confirm the need for a permanent commission to continue to access and promote this essential population, and to establish the mission, structure, and authority of a statutory Commission on African American Males.

Recitals

The 1995 *Commission on African American Males* was established to develop programs designed to address the challenges facing African American men, their families, and their communities. The *Report on the State of African American Males in Baltimore City and the Baltimore Metropolitan Area, 1996* was to serve as a catalyst for open discussion, honest assessment, and effective outcomes.

The report, a product of a 16-month project of the Mayor's office and 10 area colleges and universities, reported both positive and negative findings concerning the Baltimore metropolitan area black male population of 199,450 in 1995, according to the U. S. Census Bureau. On one end of the spectrum it was reported that black males were arrested more than 10 times as often as white males; at the other end, a successful black Baltimore-born entrepreneur amassed a fortune of an estimated \$400 million before his death in 1993.

The report consists of 9 chapters, with the first 8 focusing on selected topics relating directly to an individual's ability to thrive, participate successfully, and make an impact on his community and society, and the 9th chapter discusses and lists selected accomplishments of African American males in Baltimore City over a 200 year period.

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

Council Bill 05-0090R

1 The major recommendations of the report include:

- 2 • Leadership: Increase partnerships among existing agencies, universities, and the public
3 and private sectors to develop leadership skills and promote opportunities for African
4 American males.
- 5 • Non-custodial Fathers: Modify the Job Training Partnership Act guidelines to assign
6 higher priority for job training programs to non-custodial fathers...revise welfare and
7 child support policies to ensure that child support orders are based on ...ability to pay.
- 8 • Education Status: Focus teacher train and staff development on sensitivity and awareness
9 of the critical educational issues facing African American males...revise ...funding policy
10 so that per pupil spending is proportionate... to spending in other state jurisdictions.
- 11 • Employment and Economic Development: Emphasize and fund educational programs...to
12 gain intrinsic and portable skills, such as communications and computer-based training,
13 improve transportation and childcare services to increase workers' access to jobs
14 throughout the metropolitan region.
- 15 • Welfare Reform: Expand initiatives to assist with employment development...such as
16 resume writing, job searching, and job interviewing.
- 17 • Health and Health Care: Explore strategies for developing culturally sensitive managed
18 care programs...expand network of community health centers that address the range of
19 critical health care needs and lifestyle of the African American community...share skilled
20 manpower, technology, and research findings at local, state, and federal health agencies.
- 21 • Criminal Justice: Increase employment and educational activities for those involved in
22 the criminal justice system...demystify the Police Department complaint process to
23 increase confidence in the process.
- 24 • Religious Involvement: Enact policies to promote partnership between government and
25 faith communities ...expand initiatives with the faith community to develop leadership
26 abilities and skills of neighborhood youth.

27 In the decade following the report of the Commission, Baltimore City African American men
28 continue to face many challenges as evidenced by a report in the New England Journal of
29 Medicine where medical studies showed that black Medicare recipients were less likely to get 9
30 kinds of potentially life-saving or life-altering surgery than whites, even when the overall medical
31 needs were the same. In Baltimore, black men enrolled in Medicare were about 63% less likely
32 than white men to have heart bypass surgery between 1999 and 2001, the last years of the study.

33 In 2005, more than half of Baltimore's African American men in their 20s are either
34 incarcerated or under criminal justice system supervision according to a study by the Justice
35 Policy Institute that argues in its report that much of the money spent on incarceration would be
36 better spent on drug treatment and community redevelopment. According to the report, of the
37 approximately 25,000 black men in Baltimore between the ages of 20 and 30, 52% are
38 incarcerated or on parole or probation.

39 There continues to be an HIV/AIDS epidemic in black America. According to the Centers
40 for Disease Control and Prevention, Baltimore ranked 4th in all cases in the nation's metropolitan

Council Bill 05-0090R

1 areas in 2002, with 48.7 cases per 100,000 people. Nationwide, blacks make up 13 % of the U.S.
2 population, yet comprised 54% of all new HIV diagnoses in 2002; African Americans make up
3 65% of the population but account for 89% of the AIDS cases according to the Maryland
4 HIV/AIDS Administration.

5 The work of the 1995 Commission provides a valuable reference and scholarly springboard
6 from which the work of the 21st Century Commission can begin to look at the progress made by
7 African American males in the Baltimore area in the last 10 years. While the work of the new
8 Commission need not mirror the work of the former, many of the concepts of and persons
9 involved in that seminal group can bring to the table invaluable insight as we once again access
10 the condition of the African American male in our City.

11 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
12 Body hereby reconvenes the Commission on African American Males to assess the current
13 health, welfare, social, and spiritual condition of African American males in the Baltimore
14 metropolis, to determine the progress made in the decade since the formation of the 1995
15 Mayor’s Commission on African American Males, to identify issues that must be addressed to
16 guarantee the comprehensive forward movement of African American males in decades to come,
17 to confirm the need for a permanent commission to continue to access and promote this essential
18 population, and to establish the mission, structure, and authority of a statutory Commission on
19 African American Males.

20 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That representation on the 21st Century Commission on
21 African American Males include, but not be limited to:

- 22 1. Baltimore City Community College
- 23 2. Coppin State University
- 24 3. Johns Hopkins University
- 25 4. Loyola College
- 26 5. Morgan State University
- 27 6. Sojourner-Douglass College
- 28 7. Towson University
- 29 8. University of Baltimore
- 30 9. University of Maryland
- 31 10. University of Maryland Baltimore County
- 32 11. Baltimore City Health Department
- 33 12. Baltimore Police Department
- 34 13. Mayor’s Office
- 35 14. City Council
- 36 15. Baltimore Community Relations Commission

37 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
38 President, CEO, of Director of the entities listed above, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to
39 the City Council.