



HEARING NOTES

Resolution: 21-0039R

Violence Against Women - An Overlooked Public Health Crisis

Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology

Chaired by: Danielle McCray

Hearing Date: June 16, 2021

Time (Beginning): 11:10 AM

Time (Ending): 12:50 PM

Location: Webex Virtual Hearing

Total Attendance: Approximately 35 people

Committee Members in Attendance:

Danielle McCray John Bullock

Mark Conway James Torrence

Bill Synopsis in the file? **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Attendance sheet in the file? **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Agency reports read? **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded?..... **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?..... **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Evidence of notification to property owners? **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Final vote taken at this hearing? **YES** **NO** **N/A**

Motioned by:

Seconded by:.....

Final Vote:

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Col. Sheree Briscoe, Police Department
- Maj. LaTonya Bishop, Police Department
- D’Paul Nibber, Department of Health
- William Kellibrew, Department of Health
- Shantay Jackson, Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement
- Lea Ferguson, Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success
- Maj. Jason Gruz, Sherriff’s Office

Major Issues Discussed

1. Chairwoman McCray called the hearing to order, read the title and purpose of the resolution, and discussed the need to address and prevent violence against women in Baltimore City.
2. Col. Briscoe discussed trends in violence against women in 2020 and 2021. Maj. Bishop discussed the Police Department's efforts to address violence against women, including the adoption of victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches to investigating domestic violence and sexual assaults.
3. D'Paul Nibber summarized the Health Department's written report and discussed the Department's efforts to address intimate partner violence.
4. Shantay Jackson summarized the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement's written report and discussed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on rates of intimate partner violence.
5. Lea Ferguson summarized the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success' written report.
6. Maj. Gruzs explained the Sherriff's Office's role in preventing and responding to domestic violence and reported statistics for domestic violence related actions for 2020.
7. Yousuf Ahmad discussed the role of the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office in addressing and preventing violence against women.
8. Hilary Ruley confirmed the comments in the Law Department's written report.
9. Committee members asked the following questions:
 - a. What specific work would the requested grant funding support and is there a plan for doing that work if the grant is not awarded? The grant would support inter-agency coordination, proactive house visits, a program coordinator with House of Ruth to connect with victims, and other activities. The City is always looking for other funding opportunities to support and expand its services to prevent intimate partner violence.
 - b. What programs or systems does the City have in place to change offender behavior? The City and the House of Ruth are working to create those programs now and recognize the importance of intervention to change offender behavior.
 - c. Have there been any trends in domestic violence data that could help tailor outreach work? The Police Department does look at data to identify correlations.
 - d. Are there plans to expand the Dating Matters program to other schools in the City? The program is in year four of a five-year grant, so it is not yet clear whether it will continue or expand. National data on the program has shown effectiveness.
 - e. What has the Police Department done to ensure that sexual assault cases are properly investigated? The Police Department has done a lot of training for officers and established standards for investigations to ensure that cases are not improperly classified as unfounded. The percentage of cases classified as unfounded has dropped significantly as a result.
 - f. How much funding has the Youth Services Advocacy Program awarded for victim relocation, and has it decreased with the pandemic? The program has served 97 families with relocation support and will follow-up with the specific funding amount. The funding decreased prior to COVID-19 due to federal funding changes.

- g. What training do City staff who work with victims of domestic violence receive in trust building skills? Health Department screening staff are trained extensively in trust and relationship building skills.
- 10. Dorothy Lennig, Director of the Domestic Violence Legal Clinic at the House of Ruth, testified about the importance of preventing domestic violence and suggested approaches (written testimony in file).
- 11. Ojeda Hall, Executive Director for the One Love Foundation, testified in support of the resolution and explained the importance of education in preparing young people and families to prevent or stop intimate partner violence.
- 12. Chairwoman McCray explained that the Committee will hold additional meetings on the resolution in the future and recessed the hearing.

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes **No**

If yes, describe.

The Committee will hold additional meetings on this resolution in the future.

Committee Vote:

D. McCray:

J. Bullock:


M. Conway:

R. Dorsey:

P. Porter:

J. Torrence:

I. Schleifer:



Matthew L. Peters, Committee Staff

Date: June 17, 2021

Cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File