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BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the mission of the **Public Health and Environment Committee** is dedicated to safeguarding the well-being of Baltimore's residents by advancing policies that promote health equity, environmental justice, and sustainability. Recognizing the deep connection between public health and the environment, the committee works to reduce health disparities, improve access to essential services, and address climate-related challenges that impact communities.

**The Honorable Phylicia Porter
Chair**

PUBLIC HEARING

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2026
10:00 AM**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

RECONVENING HEARING

Legislative Oversight #LO25-0021

City's Response to the Opioid Crisis

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CITY OF BALTIMORE

Brandon M. Scott – Mayor
Zeke Cohen – Council President



Office of Council Services

Nancy Mead - Director
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BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Public Health and Environment

Legislative Oversight: LO25-0021

City's Response to the Opioid Crisis

RECONVENING HEARING

Sponsor: Councilmembers Porter, et al

Introduced: June 16, 2025

Purpose:

For the purpose: to provide a platform for city agencies, healthcare providers, and community advocates to discuss ongoing challenges, identify service gaps, and explore policy solutions to enhance Baltimore's collective response to opioid addiction and overdose prevention.

Effective: Upon enactment.

Agency Attending/Reporting

- Representative(s) from: Mayor's Office of Opioid Response (MOOR)
 - Representative(s) from: Health Department
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Analysis

Background

On Wednesday, April 15, 2026, the committee will hold its third (3rd) hearing on this legislative topic. Previous hearings were held on July 9, 2025, and October 22, 2025. Following are notes taken during October 22, 2025, hearing:

Major Speakers

- Dr. Letitia Dzirasa, Mayor's Office
- Michelle Taylor, Health Department
- Julia Roche, Health Department
- Miles Lichtman, Mayor's Office of Opioid Response (MOOR)
- Bobby Harris, MOOR Consultant
- Stefanie Mavronis, Mayor's Office of Neighbors and Safety Engagement
- Public Testimony/Speakers
 - Darci Curwen-Garber, Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
 - Thelma Davis, Speaker

Major Issues Discussed

1. Councilwoman Porter, primary sponsor of the Resolution gave opening remarks and afterward received public testimony.
2. Public Testimony (two [2] speakers). One speaker talked about her road towards recovery, (past addiction) and the importance of having two (2) resources: housing and long-term treatment.
3. Dr. Dzirasa and Ms. Michelle Taylor joined together to present and discuss a PowerPoint Presentation. **A copy is on file.**
4. Committee/council members asked questions, stated concerns, and made comments. Some highlighted topics of discussion, comments and/or concern were:
 - Question(s)/Comments/Concerns/etc.:
 - Surveillance Mechanism
 - Notification Pertaining to Mass Overdoses
 - How are you utilizing that system with our local partners?
 - I would appreciate a more detailed approach!
 - Testing Kits
 - Comments regarding the kind of and/or availability of kits
 - What is the protocol for the new and/or upcoming drugs on the market? And the trends for same?
 - Harm Reduction
 - Talk about what your definition is for harm reduction
 - Resources and oversight for harm reduction are important and of concern!
 - Comments pertaining to sustainable methods for going into treatment
 - Penn-North
 - Talk about what is happening in this area
 - Is thankful for the city's responses to same
 - Comment: Talked about the importance of treating all people with respect
 - How are you connecting people with available housing resources?
 - Tracking Treatment
 - There is a need for a "deeper dive" into drug overdoses! Many are not from Baltimore City
 - Tracking: We need to track who is receiving resources and services!
 - Open Air Drug Markets
 - This is a concern!
 - This has been an issue for a long time!
 - Opportunities are needed for those young folks out there selling drugs!

- A comprehensive approach is needed!
- Listening Sessions
 - Can you share some of the key take a ways and/or strategic plans as a result of these sessions?
- Responses and Keeping People Safe
 - Responses for mass overdoses
 - Who is accountable for same?
 - How do you determine who and/or which agencies are accountability for what? Such as: A public health vs. a public safety response?
- A committee member gave comments and expressed appreciation for the city's partnership with State, Local and Federal public safety partners.
- A committee member thanked the agency representatives for "rapid responses."
- Predatory Providers
 - Comments and concerns regarding predatory providers
 - We must continue to reward good actors and discipline bad actors!
- Overall System
 - How do we change it?
 - How do we help people take the next steps after withdrawal?
 - It is important that people know what next steps are available for them!
- There were some discussion and questions regarding "Spot Van"
- Notification System
 - It is my understanding that funding was taken away for this system!
 - Are we thinking about bringing this system back? **Answer: Yes**
 - And if so, how much would it cost?
 - There were also comments regarding "text notification system"
- Disinvested Areas
 - Comments and concerns expressed regarding vacant properties reduction strategy(s)
 - Better alignment is needed for the areas that need it the most!
 - Have you had any conversation with the Department of Housing and Community Development regarding same?
- Blitzes - In the context of drug overdose cases, a "blitz" typically refers to an intense, rapid, and coordinated effort by multiple agencies or groups to combat the issue.
 - How are you engaging with different agencies and partners regarding same?
 - The approach can not only be from a "public safety" perspective!
 - Working groups for neighborhoods within each district
 - Talk about this!
- Empowering Communities
 - Comments and concerns were talked about, to include the importance of building and equipping communities
- A committee member stated that he was glad to see the "Inspection Task Force" evolving and talked about some of progress he notified that pertains to same
- **Requests by committee members**
 - **Chairwoman Porter**
 - 1. Mass Overdose Protocol ETA – Do you have it? If so, provided by the end of this calendar year
 - 2. ETA Data Use Agreement, as soon as possible, on a monthly basis, provide an update for same.

- 3. ETA Plan Development – do you know when it will be available?
 - Mobil Street Outreach Plan – Provide a month-to-month update on developing this Plan
 - Committee member Mark Conway
 - Reestablishing the Notification System
 - Provide updates on the status of same
5. Chairwoman Porter gave closing remarks, “she stated:
- a. We must continue to focus on sustaining true recovery, better quality of life and true abstinence.
 - b. At the next hearing I would like to focus on the data and measurements for Overdose Response Strategy(s), including sustainability measures as well.
6. Hearing was called to recess.

Additional Information

Fiscal Note: None

Information Source(s): Notes taken during October 22, 2025, committee hearing.

Marguerite Currin

Analysis by: Marguerite Currin
Analysis Date: April 13, 2025

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