

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 22-0088R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Porter, Bullock
Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2022
Assigned to: Public Safety and Government Operations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – CSX Coal Silo Explosion**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from CSX Transportation, Inc., incorporated under
4 the general law of the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Baltimore Fire
5 Department, and the Office of Emergency Management to investigate the cause of the CSX
6 Coal Silo explosion that occurred on December 30, 2021, in Curtis Bay, to address what is
7 being done about air quality in the area, and to address how an incident of this type may be
8 prevented in the future.
9

10 On December 30, 2021, a loud explosion at the Curtis Bay Coal Piers operated by CSX
11 Transportation, Inc. shook the homes in Curtis Bay. Luckily no person was immediately injured
12 and damage was limited to the homes of Curtis Bay residents and commercial properties. What
13 is not know is are the long-term health implications of the explosion. Debris, coal dust, smoke,
14 and other materials were launched into the air that day. Exposure to the resulting poor air quality
15 may have a lasting impact on Curtis Bay residents.

16 The CSX operated Curtis Bay Coal Piers is the second largest exporter of coal on the East
17 Coast. The coal terminal supports coal and iron ore movements on and off the international and
18 domestic waterway systems. There are inherent hazards in handling and transporting coal. The
19 build up of highly combustible coal dust on machinery lead to the explosion on December 30th.
20 As natural byproduct of the industry, these hazards have the potential to echo beyond the CSX
21 facility and into the community of Curtis Bay, and among its residents and businesses.

22 According to a 2016 study by the Environmental Integrity Project, Curtis Bay ranks first in
23 Maryland for emissions of air toxins from stationary sources – including coal plants. From 2005
24 to 2009 Curtis Bay ranked among the top ten zip codes in the United States for air toxins
25 released, and number one from stationary sources. Curtis Bay is already burdened by significant
26 inequitable environmental conditions. The explosion on December 30th leave the residents of
27 Curtis Bay increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of poor air quality caused by concentrated coal
28 particulate in the air.

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

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1 With this investigative hearing the City Council seeks to better understand:

- 2 1. how and why the explosion happened;
- 3 2. how CSX is addressing environmental concerns in Curtis Bay as related to the coal
4 piers' close proximity to residents; and
- 5 3. how air quality is affected by the operation of the coal piers, and more specifically
6 how the December 30th explosion impacted air quality measures.

7 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
8 Baltimore City Council invites representatives from CSX Transportation, Inc., incorporated
9 under the general law of the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Baltimore Fire
10 Department, and the Office of Emergency Management to investigate the cause of the CSX Coal
11 Silo explosion that occurred on December 30, 2021, in Curtis Bay, to address what is being done
12 about air quality in the area, and to address how an incident of this type may be prevented in the
13 future.

14 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Director of
15 State Relations for CSX Transportation, Inc., the Chief of the Baltimore Fire Department, the
16 Emergency Manager of the Office of Emergency Management, and the Mayor's Legislative
17 Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.