

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 18-0100R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmembers Scott, Henry, Middleton, Burnett, Cohen, Dorsey, Bullock,  
Stokes, Sneed, Clarke, Reisinger, Costello  
Introduced and adopted: September 17, 2018

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**A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING**

**Request for Federal Action – Declaring Police Related Deaths of Unarmed Black  
Americans a Homeland Security Crisis.**

FOR the purpose of calling on President Trump to declare the deaths of unarmed Black Americans at the hands of the police in America a Homeland Security Crisis, and further requesting that the President direct the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security to invest resources into solving one of our nation’s longstanding and unaddressed problems through either direct action or partnership with local and state governments.

**Recitals**

People of color comprised just 38.5 percent of the U.S. population, but 51.5 percent of all years of life lost in police related deaths from 2015 to 2016. Furthermore, African Americans died at a rate of 7.2 per million compared to rate of 2.9 per million for White Americans in police related deaths.

The safety and protection of the public while sustaining everyone’s civil rights should be the paramount concern and duty of law enforcement officials. The Department of Justice has the monumental responsibility of ensuring that civil rights protections are enforced, especially for those who are too often the target of violations, including Black Americans and other people of color.

Following several high profile in-custody deaths President Obama launched a 21<sup>st</sup> Century policing taskforce aimed at correcting decades old issues in American Policing. Rather than abdicating federal oversight of policing, these efforts should be built upon and the current Administration should show its commitment to fixing broken policing.

Initially, the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security should call for and incentivize:

- Federal, state, and local prosecutors to prosecute police misconduct. We expect prosecutors to achieve justice and use their power to monitor police abuse.
- Local prosecutors to create a local civil rights unit dedicated to investigating and prosecuting police misconduct fairly, transparently, and independently.
- State attorneys general to provide recommendations and guidelines for local prosecutors and investigators of misconduct to ensure police accountability.

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

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- 1 • DOJ as well as state and local prosecutors to launch systemic investigations when  
2 agencies are suspected of engaging in “pattern or practice” violations and  
3 discrimination.
- 4 • Local mayors and city councils to create civilian oversight structures, select police  
5 chiefs who prioritize building trust with communities, conduct de-escalation and life  
6 preserving trainings, develop protocols to ensure these trainings are observed, and  
7 support alternative mental health interventions.
- 8 • Every police department to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and  
9 reject misguided practices such as “broken windows” and “stop & frisk.”
- 10 • Explore regulations on police use of firearms.

11 Taking a leadership role in advocating and pushing for these reforms could begin to change  
12 policing in America for the better. Discriminatory and un-American practices and policies have  
13 been tolerated for far too long throughout our nation. Nationwide leadership will be needed to  
14 begin to bring policing practices into line with our values. These steps, that should have been  
15 taken long ago, need to be taken now.

16 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the  
17 Council calls on President Trump to declare the deaths of unarmed Black Americans at the hands  
18 of the police in America a Homeland Security Crisis; and further requests that the President  
19 direct the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security to invest resources  
20 into solving one of our nation’s longstanding and unaddressed problems through either direct  
21 action or partnership with local and state governments.

22 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
23 President of the United States, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Homeland  
24 Security, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.