

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0016R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Porter and Gray

Cosponsored by: Councilmembers Parker, Conway, Torrence, Bullock, Blanchard, Jones,
Ramos, McCray, Middleton, and President Cohen

Introduced and read first time: April 7, 2025

Assigned to: Public Health and Environment Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Health Department, Office of Equity and Civil Rights,
Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Black Maternal Health**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Health Department, Office of Equity and
4 Civil Rights, Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, and other relevant parties to
5 appear before the City Council to provide insight on the perinatal and reproductive healthcare
6 needs of the Black community of Baltimore and to discuss strategies to support access to
7 effective perinatal and reproductive healthcare for Black parents.

8 **Recitals**

9 Quality perinatal and reproductive healthcare are vital to start a child's life in good health and
10 provide a safe recovery for the parent. However, Black parents do not always have access to the
11 full range of supportive care that is necessary for good health before, during, and after birth. In a
12 2023 report based on data from the National Vital Statistics System, the National Center for
13 Health Statistics found that the maternal mortality rate for Black parents was 50.3 per 100,000
14 live births, more than 3 times as high as the rate for any other surveyed racial group.

15 The Baltimore City Council seeks to promote public health and justice by improving Black
16 maternal healthcare. Black maternal health organization The Bloom Collective highlights the
17 effectiveness of certain priority focus areas to correct this major gulf in health outcomes.

18 Investment in community-based birthing centers and culturally-affirming maternal care can
19 improve health outcomes for parent and child by increasing the availability of care that is
20 comprehensive in scope and sympathetic to the needs and experiences of Black parents.

21 Black-led community healing spaces, including peer support groups and trauma-informed
22 therapy from providers with shared experience, can promote collective healing and address
23 stress, anxiety, and postpartum depression.

24 Increasing housing security by prioritizing pregnant and postpartum parents in housing
25 assistance programs and improving eviction protections will remove a major risk factor in
26 negative maternal and infant health outcomes, especially considering the housing vulnerabilities
27 that many Black Baltimoreans face.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

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1 Baltimore's advanced healthcare facilities can be effectively leveraged towards justice-
2 focused maternal health in Black communities by mandating gender and racial bias training,
3 establishing community-led health advisory bodies, and requiring reporting of demographic
4 disparities in maternal health outcomes.

5 Providing youth-focused reproductive education that does not oppress or pathologize sex and
6 pregnancy, as well as increasing availability of contraception and reproductive health services,
7 can also improve maternal mortality rates among young parents.

8 The City Council wishes to understand how practices such as these can best be implemented
9 to improve Black maternal health outcomes, and what actions City agencies can take to further
10 the goals of equity and justice in reproductive care.

11 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the City
12 Council invites representatives from the Health Department, Office of Equity and Civil Rights,
13 Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, and other relevant parties to appear before the
14 City Council to provide insight on the perinatal and reproductive healthcare needs of the Black
15 community of Baltimore and to discuss strategies to support access to effective perinatal and
16 reproductive healthcare for Black parents.

17 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Health
18 Commissioner, the Director of the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, the Executive Director of
19 the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the
20 City Council.