

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 09-0407
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Holton, D’Adamo, Kraft, Cole, Middleton, Henry, Clarke,
Branch, Welch, Conaway, Curran
Introduced and read first time: October 5, 2009
Assigned to: Community Development Subcommittee

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL concerning

2 **October 5, 2009 – United Nations World Habitat Day**

3 FOR the purpose of celebrating World Habitat Day and endorsing the United Nations’ mission to
4 encourage the world to reflect on the state of human settlements, the basic right to adequate
5 shelter for all, and our collective responsibility for the future of human habitat; and providing
6 for a special effective date.

7 **Recitals**

8 World Habitat Day celebrations began in 1986, but 2009 marks the first global celebration
9 hosted by the United States. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
10 Development and the Executive Director of the United Nations Programme for Human
11 Settlements (UN-HABITAT) will co-host a kick-off celebration at the National Building
12 Museum in Washington, D.C., adopting this year’s theme of “Planning is Our Urban Future”.

13 “Planning is Our Urban Future” is a theme meant to raise awareness of the need to improve
14 urban planning to deal with new major challenges of the 21st century so that our cities can
15 manage to reduce the impacts of climate disruption, the economic crisis, and urban poverty
16 around the world. The HUD Secretary stated that the President “has asked that we become
17 engaged in the global discussion on our shared vision of making socially and environmentally
18 sustainable urban communities.”

19 “This is a time of great challenge and great opportunity when it comes to addressing the 21st
20 Century housing and sustainability issues facing the nations of the world. By collaborating with
21 UN-HABITAT, other nations, grassroots practitioners, industry stakeholders, public and private
22 sector partners, and others, we can help steer a new, more inclusive, greener housing approach.”
23 With over ½ of the world’s population living in urban areas, and the number set to rise to ⅔ in
24 another generation, the urban agenda will of necessity become a priority for governments, local
25 authorities, and all stakeholders.

26 It is particularly appropriate that the Council endorses the mission of World Habitat Day.
27 Data recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau shows that, despite Maryland’s ranking as the
28 nation’s richest state, nearly 1 in 5 Baltimore residents and 1 in 4 children were living below the
29 poverty line in 2008. Approximately 14% of City residents received food stamps in 2008, up 2%
30 from 2007 and compared to 8.6% nationwide.

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

Council Bill 09-0407

1 Another report by the National Center for Healthy Housing showed a critical need to
2 improve housing conditions in many U.S. cities, ranking the Baltimore metropolitan area 29th in
3 healthy housing of the 45 cities surveyed. The report shows that 44% of homes in the Baltimore
4 area are likely to have at least 1 problem, compared to 36% nationally – leaks threaten to
5 contribute to respiratory problems; older housing stock poses a lead paint threat; and rodents,
6 roaches, and other undesirable co-habitants can lead to asthma.

7 Given the seriousness of the housing issues we face at home, we empathize with the need for
8 safe, affordable housing across the globe and wholeheartedly embrace the theme of United
9 Nations World Habitat Day.

10 **SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That
11 this Body celebrates World Habitat Day and endorses the United Nations’ mission to encourage
12 the world to reflect on the state of human settlements, the basic right to adequate shelter for all,
13 and our collective responsibility for the future of human habitat.

14 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the
15 Mayor, the Baltimore City Delegation to the 111th Congress, the Baltimore City Delegation to
16 the 2010 Maryland General Assembly, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the
17 Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Commissioner of Housing and
18 Community Development, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

19 **SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That this Resolution takes effect on the date it
20 is enacted.