

For Internal Use Only



**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, MAY 14, 2025
10:01 AM**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Council Resolution 25-0016R

Informational Hearing – Black Maternal Health

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS (BA)

Danielle McCray - Chair
Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer – Vice Chair
Sharon Green Middleton
Paris Gray
Antonio Glover
Staff: Marguerite Currin (443-984-3485)

PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)

Mark Conway - Chair
Zac Blanchard – Vice Chair
Danielle McCray
Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer
Paris Gray
Phylicia Porter
Antonio Glover
Staff: Anthony Leva (410-396-1091)

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (HCD)

James Torrence – Chair
Odette Ramos – Vice Chair
Zac Blanchard
Jermaine Jones
Danielle McCray
Antonio Glover
Staff: Anthony Leva (410-396-1091)

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT (PHE)

Phylicia Porter - Chair
Mark Conway - Vice Chair
Mark Parker
Ryan Dorsey
James Torrence
John Bullock
Odette Ramos
Staff: Deontre Hayes (410-396-1260)

LABOR AND WORKFORCE (LW)

Jermaine Jones – Chair
James Torrence – Vice Chair
Danielle McCray
Ryan Dorsey
Phylicia Porter
Staff: Deontre Hayes (410-396-1260)

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Ryan Dorsey – Chair
Sharon Green Middleton – Vice Chair
Mark Parker
Paris Gray
John Bullock
Phylicia Porter
Zac Blanchard
Staff: Anthony Leva (410-396-1091)

EDUCATION, YOUTH AND OLDER ADULT (EYOA)

John Bullock – Chair
Mark Parker – Vice Chair
Sharon Green Middleton
James Torrence
Zac Blanchard
Jermaine Jones
Odette Ramos
Staff: Deontre Hayes (410-396-1260)

LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATIONS (LI)

Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer - Chair
Antonio Glover – Vice Chair
Ryan Dorsey
Sharon Green Middleton
Paris Gray
Staff: Marguerite Currin (443-984-3485)

CITY OF BALTIMORE
BRANDON SCOTT – MAYOR
ZEKE COHEN - COUNCIL PRESIDENT



OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES
NANCY MEAD – DIRECTOR
100 N. HOLIDAY STREET
BALTIMORE MD, 21202

BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Public Health and Environment

Council Resolution: 25-0016R

Informational Hearing – Black Maternal Health

Sponsor: *Councilmembers Porter and Gray, et al*

Introduced: *April 7, 2025*

Purpose:

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

Effective: Upon enactment.

Agency Reports

Department of Health	None as of this writing
Office of Equity and Human Rights	None as of this writing

Analysis

Background & Current Law

Council Bill 25-0016R seeks to address disparities in Black maternal health outcomes within Baltimore by conducting an informational hearing involving key city agencies and stakeholders. The resolution aims to gather insights and discuss strategic initiatives such as community-based birthing centers, culturally affirming maternal care, enhanced housing security, and bias training for healthcare providers. It recognizes the critical disparity evidenced by a significantly higher maternal mortality rate among Black parents compared to other racial groups, emphasizing the necessity for targeted intervention and systemic reforms.

Adopting this resolution would significantly benefit Baltimore by potentially lowering maternal mortality rates among Black communities through tailored healthcare reforms and enhanced social support structures. Improved access to culturally sensitive maternal care, combined with initiatives addressing housing instability and bias in healthcare, would lead to healthier families and stronger community resilience. This aligns with the broader objectives of social justice and public health equity, fostering a more supportive environment for Black parents and ultimately promoting the overall well-being of the city.

Additional Information

Fiscal Note: Note: Due to pending reports from the Department of Finance and other agencies, a comprehensive fiscal analysis cannot yet be completed.

Information Source(s): Reporting Agencies, 25-0016R.

Deontre Hayes

Marguerite Currin

Analysis by: Deontre Hayes and Marguerite Currin

Direct Inquiries to: (443) 984-3485

Analysis Date: May 12, 2025

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

AGENCY REPORTS

NONE RECEIVED
AS OF THIS WRITING

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.

Council Bill 25-0016R

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.