

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 21-0026R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Porter, Conway, Bullock, McCray, Ramos, Torrence, Stokes,
Middleton, Cohen, Glover

Introduced and read first time: March 8, 2021

Assigned to: Ways and Means Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, Baltimore
Development Corporation

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing – COVID-19 and Small Business Re-Openings**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore Development Corporation to brief
4 the City Council on their efforts to support small businesses and economic development in
5 light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

6 **Recitals**

7 COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Baltimore’s economy, especially the small
8 business community. The Baltimore Development Corporation (“BDC”) is the City’s economic
9 development agency. BDC has led the City’s response and recovery effort with respect to the
10 economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

11 BDC has strived to deliver an innovative and equitable response to help local business
12 through the pandemic and has emphasized supporting resident-, women- and Black, Indigenous
13 and People of Color (BIPOC)-owned businesses. BDC’s efforts have been recognized both
14 locally and nationally.

15 To date, BDC has awarded over 1,000 small business assistance grants totaling
16 approximately \$13 million. Sixty-three percent of all small business assistance grants were
17 awarded to BIPOC-owned businesses; 57% of all small business assistance grants were awarded
18 to women-owned businesses; and 66% of all small business assistance grants were award to
19 Baltimore City resident-owned businesses.

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

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1 With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, BDC and the Baltimore Small Business Support
2 Fund (“BSBSF”) partnered to ensure relief resources reached as many businesses as possible and
3 especially BIPOC-owned businesses in disinvested neighborhoods. This partnership formed the
4 Baltimore Small Business Technical Assistance Network (“TA Network”), a partnership of 19
5 organizations coordinated by BDC and funded by the BSBSF coalition of foundations. To date,
6 the TA Network has more than 1,400 business tracked in its shared database. Sixty percent of
7 the businesses are BIPOC-owned and 80% of the businesses are sole proprietors or have five or
8 fewer employees.

9 As BDC addresses the current economic crisis, the agency is also undertaking a robust
10 economic strategic planning effort. BDC recently released an interim report on its
11 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy named “Baltimore Together – A Platform for
12 Inclusive Prosperity”. This effort describes the BDC will take to promote inclusive economic
13 recovery and growth in the City over the next 5 years.

14 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the City
15 Council invites representatives from the Baltimore Development Corporation to brief the City
16 Council on their efforts to support small businesses and economic development in light of the
17 COVID-19 pandemic.

18 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
19 President and CEO of the Baltimore Development Corporation, and the Mayor’s Legislative
20 Liaison to the City Council.