

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 08-0211
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Curran, President Rawlings-Blake, Councilmembers Reisinger, Kraft, D'Adamo, Henry, Spector, Middleton, Conaway, Holton, Welch, Cole, Young, Branch, and Clarke

Introduced and read first time: September 22, 2008

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A RESOLUTION of the Mayor and City Council concerning

**2 In Tribute to the Honorable Kenneth N. Harris, Sr. – A Distinguished Son
3 of Baltimore City Gone Far too Soon**

4 FOR the purpose of paying tribute to Ken Harris, our dear friend; expressing appreciation for his
5 many years of dedicated public service to the citizens of the City of his birth; acknowledging
6 his strength of character that carried him from personal poverty to political purpose; offering
7 the deepest sympathy to his loving family, loyal friends, and dedicated colleagues on the sad
8 occasion of his untimely and senseless death; and urging the citizens of Baltimore City to
9 unite to secure the better future that Ken envisioned for us all; and providing for a special
10 effective date.

11 Recitals

12 When gunmen took the life of Kenneth Harris in the early morning hours of September 20, in
13 the words of the Mayor of Baltimore City: “Our City lost a committed advocate for people who
14 didn’t always have a voice. When it came to young people, people losing their homes and
15 people who just needed a little help – Ken was always there, speaking up for them and asking all
16 of us to do what was right.”

17 Ironically, in his more than 8 years of service on the City Council, one of Ken’s main
18 legislative quests was making this City a safer place, to protect all the citizens, particularly those
19 of the North and Northeast Baltimore neighborhoods he represented, from the kind of senseless
20 violence that took his life. He sought to keep young people off the streets that spawned such
21 violence by championing the Baltimore Truancy Assessment Centers to counsel and provide
22 needed social services to youth who are ‘skipping’ class.

23 An outspoken advocate for public safety, he frequently took an interest in law enforcement
24 and crime issues, challenging the Police Department to provide the best possible public service,
25 to be prudent in charging youth with minor offenses that jeopardized their jobs and education, to
26 desist in the practice of mass arrests in poorer neighborhoods, to avoid quota arrests, and
27 following the death of a suspect, he was one of the first in the country to call for hearings on the
28 indiscriminate use of the controversial Taser.

29 Born to poverty in West Baltimore, Ken worked hard to achieve higher education and to
30 provide a good quality of life for his beloved family. Despite his personal accomplishments,
31 however, he never forgot those fighting to escape the City’s “mean streets”. His legislative

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

Council Bill 08-0211

1 successes included a measure requiring landlords to store the belongings of the tenants they
2 evicted for non-payment and requiring the builders of the new hotel near the convention center
3 to dedicate millions of dollars for scholarships.

4 In assuring Ken’s family during this difficult time that the entire Council’s thoughts and
5 prayers are with them, the President of the City Council stated the heartfelt sentiment of all:
6 “Ken Harris was a wonderful public servant who always put the interests of his constituents first.
7 Ken was always a gentleman, and a true servant to the citizens of Baltimore. I’m confident that
8 those responsible for this senseless killing will be brought to justice.”

9 **SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That
10 this Body hereby, with heavy hearts, pays tribute to Ken Harris, our dear friend; expresses
11 appreciation for his many years of dedicated public service to the citizens of the City of his birth;
12 acknowledges his strength of character that carried him from personal poverty to political
13 purpose; offers the deepest sympathy to his loving family, loyal friends, and dedicated
14 colleagues on the sad occasion of his untimely and senseless death; and urges the citizens of
15 Baltimore City to unite to secure the better future that Ken envisioned for us all.

16 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to his
17 loving family, wife, Mrs. Annette Harris, and children Nicole and Kenneth, Jr.

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