

**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 15-0246R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: President Young, Councilmembers Henry, Middleton, Costello, Holton, Kraft,  
Branch, Stokes, Clarke, Welch, Curran, Mosby, Reisinger, Spector

Introduced and read first time: August 17, 2015

Assigned to: Taxation, Finance and Economic Development Committee

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REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Department of Recreation and Parks, Baltimore Hotel  
Corporation, Department of Finance

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A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Funding Recreation Centers by Selling the City-Owned Hilton**  
3 **Hotel**

4 FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from the Baltimore Hotel Corporation, the  
5 Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Department of Finance to appear before the  
6 Council to discuss the possibility of funding recreation center upgrades through a sale of the  
7 City-owned Hilton Hotel.

8 **Recitals**

9 There is a broad consensus in Baltimore, both within City government and in the community,  
10 that we need to make substantial investments in recreation centers to give our youth more  
11 opportunities for constructive activities. It's also generally agreed that providing these  
12 opportunities is an essential core function of Baltimore City government.

13 Despite the consensus that more recreation resources are needed, there is no matching  
14 consensus on where additional recreation funding can or should be found.

15 One idea under discussion has proposed seeking \$40 to \$60 million of a planned \$136  
16 million in recreation spending from the sale of City-owned parking garages. However, it is  
17 questionable whether taking a profit making asset that supports another important municipal  
18 responsibility off the books really makes fiscal or policy sense over either the long or short term.

19 If the City is looking to sell assets to fund the construction of recreation centers, it should  
20 first look at assets that do not perform a traditional municipal government function and at those  
21 not contributing to the City's budget. Clearly, the City-owned Hilton Hotel would have to top  
22 any list of "non-traditional" municipal assets, and it also has not yet added to the City's bottom  
23 line; accordingly, it should also top any list of properties that the City should consider selling.

24 Ending the City's involvement in this project would not weaken the City's ability to perform  
25 any of its core functions. But an asset built a mere 7 years ago with roughly \$300 million of  
26 public funds could certainly be expected to bring in significantly more than the \$60 million the  
27 garage sale advocates hope to generate, perhaps even enough to expand on the currently proposed  
28 recreation center building program.

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

**Council Bill 15-0246R**

1           Recreation centers desperately need more funding for construction and maintenance. It is  
2 important that this funding be obtained quickly and in a way that doesn't harm the City's  
3 financial standing or ability to perform other traditional functions. If handled properly, a sale of  
4 the City's unusual publically owned hotel could be the best way to meet all of these priorities.  
5 Selling the City-owned Hilton Hotel to pay for recreation center improvements is therefore an  
6 idea that should be seriously considered and fully explored.

7           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the  
8 Council calls on representatives from the Baltimore Hotel Corporation, the Department of  
9 Recreation and Parks, and the Department of Finance to appear before the Council to discuss the  
10 possibility of funding recreation center upgrades through a sale of the City-owned Hilton Hotel.

11           **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
12 Baltimore Hotel Corporation, the Director of Recreation and Parks, the Director of Finance, and  
13 the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.