

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 20-0261R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: President Scott, All Members
Introduced and adopted: December 7, 2020

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

1 **Recognizing the Service of Councilmember Mary Pat Clarke**

2 FOR the purpose of recognizing Councilmember Mary Pat Clarke for her decades of service to
3 Baltimore City, on her retirement from the Baltimore City Council.

4 **Recitals**

5 Councilmember Mary Pat Clarke began her political career in Baltimore City with the New
6 Democratic Club (NDC2), which was a reform political organization of the 1970's. She was part
7 of a new wave of politicians who sought to move power from the bosses to the people. She was
8 also involved in the City's first efforts to create a biracial political coalition. Since her
9 beginnings in politics, Councilmember Clarke has been known for her focus on constituent work
10 and neighborhood issues.

11 Councilmember Clarke was first elected to the Baltimore City Council in 1975 – she was
12 elected to represent the 2nd District and was only the 7th woman to ever be elected to the
13 Baltimore City Council. She represented the 2nd District from 1975-1983 and was known as an
14 independent voice that frequently challenged other councilmembers. While representing the 2nd
15 District she introduced an extension to the rent-control policy and a bill to limit the size of
16 classes in Baltimore City schools. She introduced and successfully passed a bill creating the
17 Residential Parking Permit program.

18 In 1983, in her initial run for Council President, the Baltimore Sun wrote “she has practiced
19 the politics of opposition – providing the voice of legitimate grievance, exploiting rather than
20 denying the unmet need – for 8 years.... She provides the views of a younger generation in
21 politics, with energy to match. Her great virtue, as in rental housing or school-class size, is to
22 hold a problem to the light.”

23 Councilmember Clarke joined the City Council a second time starting in 1987, this time as
24 President. Councilmember Clarke was the first woman to be elected City Council President and
25 served as President from 1987-1995. As Council President, she was committed to open
26 government and governmental transparency. President Clarke opened Board of Estimates “mini-
27 meetings” to the public and televised Council meetings on the City’s cable network. Her support
28 as Council President was crucial to the passage of a 1988 bill outlawing discrimination based on
29 sexual preference. She also lent much-needed support to a redistricting bill sponsored by
30 Councilmember Stokes that sought to increase the number of Black councilmembers. As a
31 strong supporter of workers’ rights, in 1994, under her stewardship, the Council passed the first
32 living wage law. Always responsive to constituent needs, in 1993 she spent a night in the
33 Lexington Terrace housing project to experience the abysmal conditions of the place firsthand.
34 She also fought against the partial-privatization of City schools in the 1990s.

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

Council Bill 20-0261R

1 Councilmember Clarke joined the City Council for a third time in 2004, when she was
2 elected to represent the 14th District. Councilmember Clarke has been representing the 14th
3 District since her 2004 victory. During this period on the Council, Councilmember Clarke has
4 continued fighting for workers' rights; in 2017, she was the lead sponsor for the \$15 minimum
5 wage bill. Also a supporter of the environment, Councilmember Clarke supported the many
6 attempts to ban polystyrene until the ban was successfully passed in 2018. With her colleague Ed
7 Reisinger, she sought to ban crude oil terminals from Baltimore and has been a tireless advocate
8 of the Council's Clean Air Act that seeks to reduce air pollution and improve the health of all
9 City residents.

10 Councilmember Clarke was dean of the 72nd term of the City Council and took her role as a
11 mentor to the next generation of law makers very seriously. Councilmember Clarke is the 4th
12 longest-serving councilmember in the history of the Council, with 32 years of service. The
13 President and all members of the City Council will miss Councilmember Clarke and thank her
14 for her service.

15 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the City
16 Council recognizes Councilmember Mary Pat Clarke for her decades of service to Baltimore
17 City, on her retirement from the Baltimore City Council.

18 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to Councilmember
19 Mary Pat Clarke, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.