

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 21-0004R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Stokes, Glover, Middleton, Cohen, Burnett, Porter

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2021

Assigned to: Health, Environment, and Technology Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Health Committee, Office of Civil Rights and Wage Enforcement, Baltimore City Public School System, Department of Transportation, City Solicitor, Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Recreation and Parks, Police Department, Department of Planning

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Recognizing Systemic Racism as a Public Health Crisis**

3 FOR the purpose of recognizing systemic racism as a public health crisis.

4 **Recitals**

5 **WHEREAS**, Systemic racism has been an aspect of American life since the founding of this
6 country;

7 **WHEREAS**, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have declared that health is
8 determined in part by access to social and economic opportunities, and that the conditions in
9 which we live affect why the health outcomes of some Americans are better than those of others;

10 **WHEREAS**, In recent decades, scientific research has shown that racism is a fundamental
11 cause of poor health outcomes for racial minorities;

12 **WHEREAS**, Racial inequities have significant negative effects on the health outcomes of black
13 and brown residents of Baltimore City and elsewhere;

14 **WHEREAS**, Systemic racism led to housing policies that created segregation, which resulted
15 in black and brown residents of Baltimore City and other cities, living in poisoned environments
16 filled with water pollution and air pollution and lacking basic access to affordable, fresh foods
17 and efficient public transportation;

18 **WHEREAS**, Segregated, impoverished neighborhoods lack employment opportunities for
19 residents, which can lead residents to turn to crime to pay for basic living expenses, which in turn
20 makes such neighborhoods unsafe and stressful for residents to live in and thus leads to an
21 increase in violent deaths for residents and an increase in residents' susceptibility to a variety of
22 chronic diseases;

23 **WHEREAS**, Black residents of Baltimore City are far likelier than non-hispanic white
24 residents to be hospitalized for several chronic diseases and drug or alcohol use, to have sexually
25 transmitted diseases, and to report that they have poor mental health;

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

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1 **WHEREAS**, Life expectancies in less wealthy areas of Baltimore City, which are
2 predominantly populated by black and brown residents, can be up to 20 years less than life
3 expectancies in wealthier areas of the City;

4 **WHEREAS**, Nationally, black women are 3 to 4 times likelier to die from preventable
5 pregnancy-related complications than non-hispanic white women, and the death rate for black
6 infants is twice that of infants born to non-hispanic white women; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Black residents make up 30% of Maryland’s population but make up half of the
8 deaths and infected cases from COVID-19 where race is known.

9 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the City
10 Council recognizes systemic racism as a public health crisis.

11 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
12 Health Commissioner, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.