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**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL  
EDUCATION, WORKFORCE, AND YOUTH  
COMMITTEE**

*Mission Statement*

*The Committee on Education, Workforce and Youth (EWY)* is responsible for creating opportunities for our young people, ensuring economic opportunity and prosperity for Baltimore's workforce, and supporting our most vulnerable neighbors. The committee's areas of jurisdiction include public education, labor relations, workforce development, employment, public parks, recreation, and youth affairs. Issue areas include, but are not limited to: education, including adult education, higher education, workforce development, labor, senior affairs, veterans, childcare, accessibility and disability issues, recreation and parks, and historical landmarks.

**The Honorable Robert Stokes, Sr.  
Chairman**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021  
10:00 AM**

**VIRTUAL WEBEX MEETING**

*Council Resolution #21-0022R*

**Assisting Baltimore City Artists**

# CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES

## **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (ECD)**

Sharon Green Middleton, Chair  
John Bullock – Vice Chair  
Mark Conway  
Ryan Dorsey  
Antonio Glover  
Odette Ramos  
Robert Stokes  
*Staff: Jennifer Coates*

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Kristerfer Burnett  
Ryan Dorsey  
Danielle McCray  
Sharon Green Middleton  
Isaac “Yitzy” Schleifer  
Robert Stokes  
*Staff: Marguerite Currin*

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (SGO)**

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Zeke Cohen  
Erick Costello  
Antonio Glover  
Phylicia Porter  
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Sharon Green Middleton  
Phylicia Porter  
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*Staff: Marguerite Currin*

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John Bullock  
Mark Conway  
Ryan Dorsey  
Phylicia Porter  
James Torrence  
Isaac “Yitzy” Schleifer  
*Staff: Matthew Peters*

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Kristerfer Burnett  
Mark Conway  
Eric Costello  
Sharon Green Middleton  
Odette Ramos  
James Torrence  
*Staff: Richard Krummerich*

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

BRANDON M. SCOTT, Mayor



**OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES**

LARRY E. GREENE, Director  
415 City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
410-396-7215 / Fax: 410-545-7596  
email: larry.greene@baltimorecity.gov

**BILL SYNOPSIS**

**Committee:** Education, Workforce and Youth

**Resolution:** 21-0022R

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**Assisting Baltimore City Artists**

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**Sponsor:** Councilmember Dorsey, et al

**Introduced:** February 22, 2021

**Purpose:**

**For the purpose** of calling on the Administration, if the City receives additional COVID-19 relief funds from the United States Congress, to invest at least \$1 million of those funds to establish an emergency fund to assist Baltimore City artists.

**Effective:** Upon enactment.

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**Agency Reports**

Law Department	<b>Favorable/Comments</b>
Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts	None received as of this writing
Department of Finance	None received as of this writing
Baltimore Development Corporation	<b>Favorable</b>
Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success	None received as of this writing
Mayor's Office of Employment Development	None received as of this writing

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## Analysis

### Current Law

**Baltimore City Code – Article 1, Subtitle 1-City Council, Section 1-6**

**§ 1-6. Agencies to provide legislative information.**

It shall be the duty of the head of every City department or bureau established by the Baltimore City Charter or by ordinance to provide all technical materials, plats, drawings, and information that are requested by any member or the President of the City Council for the purpose of introducing legislation into the Council.  
(City Code, 1976/83, art. 1, §6.) (Ord. 76-080.)

### Background

This resolution is for the purpose expressing the City Council’s desire that should the Mayor and City Council receive additional COVID-19 relief funds from the federal government that one million dollars of those funds go to assist artists in Baltimore City.<sup>1</sup>

Per the primary sponsor of the Resolution, “We must realize how important Artists are to our lives and our economy; without them our lives would not be the same! I have talked with several representatives from non-profit art establishments; many Artists have largely been left out and are not eligible for unemployment because many are self-employed. So many Artists are struggling and it is important that we recognize they have been left behind in the recovery effort.”<sup>2</sup>

They (Artists) need some relief, we will hear from some of these Artists at the hearing.<sup>3</sup>

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### Additional Information

**Fiscal Note:** None

**Information Source(s):** City Code and Council Resolution 21-0022R

*Marguerite M. Currin*

Analysis by: Marguerite M. Currin  
Analysis Date: March 09, 2021

Direct Inquiries to: (443) 984-3485

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<sup>1</sup> Law Department’s Report

<sup>2</sup> The Honorable Ryan Dorsey, Councilmember, District 3

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Council Resolution 21-0022R

Agency Reports Received

SEE ATTACHED

March 3, 2021

The Honorable President and Members  
of the Baltimore City Council  
Attn: Executive Secretary  
Room 409, City Hall  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 21-0022R – Assisting Baltimore City Artists

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 21-0022R for form and legal sufficiency. This resolution is for the purpose expressing the City Council's desire that should the Mayor and City Council receive additional COVID-19 relief funds from the federal government that one million dollars of those funds go to assist artists in Baltimore City.

A resolution is an appropriate way for the City Council of Baltimore to conduct an investigative hearing. *See, e.g., Inlet Assocs. v. Assateague House Condominium*, 313 Md. 413, 428 (1988). Therefore, the Law Department approves this Resolution for form and legal sufficiency.

Very truly yours,



Hilary Ruley  
Chief Solicitor

cc: Matthew Stegman  
Nina Themelis  
Nikki Thompson  
Elena DiPietro  
Victor Tervalá  
Ashlea Brown



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** March 8, 2021  
**TO:** Education, Workforce, and Youth Committee  
**FROM:** Colin Tarbert, President and CEO  
**POSITION:** Support  
**SUBJECT:** Council Bill No. 21-0022R  
Assisting Baltimore City Artists

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin Tarbert".

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) has been asked to respond to City Council Bill No. 21-0022R introduced by Councilmembers Dorsey, Burnett, Cohen, and Middleton.

### **PURPOSE**

This Resolution calls on the Administration, if it receives future COVID-19 relief funds from the United States Congress, to invest a minimum of \$1,000,000 to establish an emergency fund to assist Baltimore City artists.

### **BRIEF HISTORY**

Independent artists make up a unique part of the City's workforce, many being self-employed and freelance workers. Due to these distinctions, many of the individuals that make up the artist workforce have gone without regular or pandemic unemployment assistance.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None

### **AGENCY POSITION**

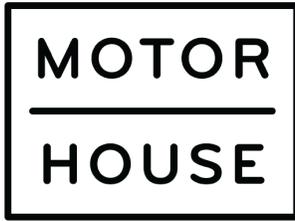
BDC **supports** City Council Bill No. 21-0022R.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kimberly Clark at [kclark@baltimoredevelopment.com](mailto:kclark@baltimoredevelopment.com) or at 410-837-9305.

[LC]

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
RECEIVED  
AS  
OF  
THIS  
WRITING

SEE ATTACHED



The Motor House  
120 W North Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21201

(410) 637 - 8307  
motorhousebaltimore.com

**March 8, 2021**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
Council Bill 21-0022R**

Thank you for your consideration of Resolution 21-0022R. This legislation establishes a \$1 million emergency fund for artists in Baltimore City.

Emergency funding for artists is an ongoing need for artists until the country achieves herd immunity from the COVID-19 pandemic, and beyond. The pandemic has magnified the role of artists in navigating the world. Not only are artists creating language and vocabulary that puts our feelings into concrete terms, but they are also offering respite from the overwhelmingly negative reality. Artists are saving us. We need to save them back.

At Motor House, we are committed to doing this work as well. We have been recipients of multiple emergency funding awards and we have been able to pass those funds down to as many artists as possible through performances and exhibitions. However, our funds are finite. The city must take on the task of taking care of artist residents as the benefit to the city is invaluable, and the potential loss of these residents would be detrimental.

Because artists are often independent contractors, they have been particularly impacted by the loss of work as they are ineligible to receive many of the unemployment benefits that other residents who lost work due to the pandemic are entitled to. Typically, artists' work is dependent upon public viewership. They may not simply turn their work into a digital format. We must not punish them for this. In order to keep these artists alive during this time, we must find continued ways to keep them living safely in Baltimore, so that we do not lose them. When the pandemic ends, we want them to still be here.

For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on Resolution 21-0022R.

Thank you,

Camille Kashaka  
Executive Director, Motor House

## **Currin, Marguerite (City Council)**

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**From:** Dorsey, Ryan (City Council)  
**Sent:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:01 PM  
**To:** Kotic Couture  
**Cc:** Currin, Marguerite (City Council)  
**Subject:** FW: Written Testimony

Thank you, Ky.

Ryan Dorsey  
Baltimore City Council  
District 3  
o 410-396-4812  
c 410-925-4156

**From:** Kotic Couture <bookkoticcouture@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 8, 2021 4:48 PM  
**To:** Dorsey, Ryan (City Council) <Ryan.Dorsey@baltimorecity.gov>  
**Subject:** Written Testimony

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of Baltimore City IT Network Systems.  
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Hello,

My name is Ky "Kotic Couture" Wilson, I'm a Recording Artist, DJ and Event Host in Baltimore City. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimonial to help assist Baltimore Creatives with the financial loss they have faced over the past year.

I am in full support of Bill 21-0022R, for many Baltimore artists our major income comes from our art and being able to provide entertainment live specifically in my case. I have deeply felt the financial blow this past year with losing out on shows, gigs and residency events. For most Queer and Trans Black Artists we depend on the nightlife and artistic endeavors to fund our lives and support us for day to day needs including food, resources, bills and healthcare. With the assistance from this bill there is the ability to help stabilize ourselves again, create art that in turn can create revenue and allow us in some way to again effectively feed and interact with our communities.

The ability to work as an artist is the ability to charge our worth, to have a constant flow of income and to receive a financial cushion for things that we have to pay for out of pocket i.e. therapy, medication, supplies and income for daily life expenses. We are also able to continuously reinvest into our crafts and endeavors when we are regularly making income.

As a Non-Binary Queer Working artist in Baltimore City not only was my art creating and showcasing an act of resistance it was creating a physical space and refuge for other Queer folks. With VERSION, the monthly queer dance party I hosted, we were not only able to craft a space but able to put money back into our community and help other Queer and Trans folks and organizations that needed assistance monthly with the income from our party. Losing this income not only have we temporarily lost a venue space but we have also lost the ability to continue to help our community in the

way we were previously. Not only are we barely able to support our community, we are also barely able to support ourselves. Many of us have racked up multiple personal debts during this time of financial loss attempting to keep ourselves afloat, we have had to "borrow" from ourselves and others and may not be in the position to repay which for many of us is now creating an ongoing financial issue with even less income than before, and no foreseeable timeline of when we'll be able to get back into our respective fields to start generating income again.

Again, I'm in complete and total support of this bill and the opportunity to pay artists to survive, oftentimes art is written off or seen as less than important but is literally the most important factor in our everyday lives. From the design of our roads, the tailoring of our clothes, the display of visual aids to promote social distancing, the designs of the machines that are allowing us to speak and the intricacies of the devices that keep us connected. When thinking about the passing of this bill I invite you to think of the things you indulged in while experiencing Covid-19 last March and April when we were all first at home. Whether it was reading a book, listening to a podcast, watching an old movie, listening to music, whatever the release was that got you through, I'm sure you have some form of ART to thank for that.

Thank you.

--

**Ky 'Kotic Couture' Wilson**  
**They/Them**  
**410-200-4852**  
[KoticCouture.com](http://KoticCouture.com)

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**CITY OF BALTIMORE**  
**COUNCIL BILL 21-0022R**  
**(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmembers Dorsey, Burnett, Cohen, Middleton

Introduced and read first time: February 22, 2021

Assigned to: Education, Workforce, and Youth Committee

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REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, Department of Finance, Baltimore Development Corporation, Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, Mayor's Office of Employment Development

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A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Assisting Baltimore City Artists**

3 FOR the purpose of calling on the Administration, if the City receives additional COVID-19 relief  
4 funds from the United States Congress, to invest at least \$1 million of those funds to  
5 establish an emergency fund to assist Baltimore City artists.

6 **Recitals**

7 The Baltimore City Council recognizes the significant contributions of artists in the City and  
8 their direct impact on economic vitality, community investment, and tourism attraction. Artists  
9 make up an integral part of Baltimore's cultural heritage and are a vital part of its national  
10 identity.

11 Independent artists make up a unique part of the City's workforce, many being self-employed  
12 and freelance workers. Due to these distinctions, many of the individuals that make up the artist  
13 workforce have gone without regular or pandemic unemployment assistance. Without this critical  
14 provision, artists have gone without traditional government assistance during a national health  
15 and economic crisis.

16 The Baltimore City Council requests that the Mayor's office provide critical emergency  
17 economic relief for Baltimore City's artists who have suffered undue hardships caused by the  
18 health and safety closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

19 Should the City receive additional COVID-19 relief funds from the United States Congress,  
20 City Council requests that the Mayor invest at least \$1 million towards an emergency artist relief  
21 fund.

22 COVID-19 has had a disproportionate effect on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color  
23 (BI-POC), both in terms of economic hardships and healthcare. This pandemic has negatively  
24 affected arts communities of color and further stifled their creativity and investment  
25 opportunities. The Council requests that any emergency artist fund specifically address and  
26 invest in BI-POC artists in Baltimore and that funds should be granted directly to individual  
27 artists.

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

**Council Bill 21-0022R**

1       **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the  
2 Council calls on the Administration, if the City receives additional COVID-19 relief funds from  
3 the United States Congress, to invest at least \$1 million of those funds to establish an emergency  
4 fund to assist Baltimore City artists.

5       **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
6 Director of Finance, the Executive Director of the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts,  
7 and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.