



**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**

*Mission Statement*

*On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City*, the Committee on Economic and Community Development (ECD) is responsible for supporting strong thriving communities ECD will review proposed zoning and land use changes, tackle issues related to economic development, oversee housing policy, and promote equitable economic opportunity for all Baltimore residents.

**The Honorable Sharon Green Middleton**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**May 25, 2021**

**2:00 PM**

**Virtual Webex Meeting**

**City Council Bill #21-0028R**

**Informational Hearing - Baltimore's Plan for our Neighbors Experiencing Homelessness and Residing in Hotels during the Pandemic**

# CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES

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Mark Conway  
Ryan Dorsey  
Antonio Glover  
Odette Ramos  
Robert Stokes  
*Staff: Jennifer Coates*

## **WAYS AND MEANS (W&M)**

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Kristerfer Burnett  
Ryan Dorsey  
Danielle McCray  
Sharon Green Middleton  
Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer  
Robert Stokes  
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## **RULES AND LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT (OVERSIGHT)**

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Kristerfer Burnett  
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Sharon Green Middleton  
Odette Ramos  
James Torrence  
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**Committee: Economic and Community Development**

**Bill 21-0028R**

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**Informational Hearing - Baltimore’s Plan for our Neighbors Experiencing Homelessness and Residing in Hotels during the Pandemic**

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**Purpose:**

For the purpose of inviting the Acting Director of the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services, the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success, the City Administrator, the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the advocacy groups Housing Our Neighbors and Homeless Persons Representation Project to brief and advise the City Council as to: the overall outcomes for neighbors experiencing homelessness who were able to reside in the hotels; what is next for them; assistance for those experiencing homelessness in encampments during the crisis; and the availability of programs to access housing.

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**AGENCY REPORTS**

*As of 05-20-21*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| City Solicitor                                  |  |
| Department of Finance                           |  |
| City Administrator                              |  |
| Department of Housing and Community Development |  |
| Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success   |  |
| Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services             |  |

## Background

The Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS) implements federal, state, and local policy and best practices in addition to administering and monitoring homeless services grants. According to the MOHS, approximately 2,500 men, women and children are homeless in Baltimore on any given night. MOHS cites four primary factors contributing to homelessness: lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable health care, low incomes and a lack of comprehensive services. Chronic illnesses, including substance abuse disorders and persistent mental illness, and other physical disabilities create additional challenges in resolving homelessness.

In late March 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic, Baltimore City moved certain groups of homeless people into hotels in order to provide sheltering in compliance with CDC guidelines and allow for the safe quarantine of people testing positive for COVID-19. Currently, Baltimore holds lease agreements with two motels and four hotels, which collectively provide shelter and support services to more than 600 people — most of whom are older adults and/or have underlying health conditions that make them particularly COVID vulnerable. The current leasing model is not a sustainable long-term solution. The City is seeking possible alternative options.

Bill 21-0028R invites the following representatives to brief and advise the City Council about the outcomes of residents that were allowed to reside in hotels during the pandemic.

### City Agencies/Representatives

- Acting Director of the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services
- Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success
- Baltimore City Administrator
- Acting Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development

### Organizations

- Advocate of the Housing Our Neighbors
- Advocate of the Homeless Persons Representation Project

The City Council is to be briefed and advised on the following topics.

1. What are the next steps for persons allowed to reside in hotels during the pandemic?
  2. What assistance is available to encamped homeless persons during the pandemic?
  3. Are there programs available to help the homeless access housing?
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## Additional Information

**Fiscal Note:** Not Available

**Information Source(s):** Bill 21-0028R, Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, Office of the Mayor  
– News Release

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Analysis by: Jennifer L. Coates

Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396-1260

Analysis Date: May 20, 2021

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**CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL 21-0028R  
(Resolution)**

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Introduced by: Councilmembers Ramos, Middleton, Bullock, Schleifer, Torrence, Stokes, Cohen,  
Porter

Introduced and read first time: March 8, 2021

Assigned to: Economic and Community Development

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REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, City  
Administrator, Department of Housing and Community Development, Mayor's Office of  
Children and Family Success, Mayor's Office of Homeless Services

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A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing – Baltimore's Plan for our Neighbors Experiencing**  
3 **Homelessness and Residing in Hotels during the Pandemic**

4 FOR the purpose of inviting the Acting Director of the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, the  
5 Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the City Administrator, the  
6 Acting Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the  
7 advocacy groups Housing Our Neighbors and Homeless Persons Representation Project to  
8 brief and advise the City Council as to: the overall outcomes for neighbors experiencing  
9 homelessness who were able to reside in the hotels; what is next for them; assistance for  
10 those experiencing homelessness in encampments during the crisis; and the availability of  
11 programs to access housing.

12 **Recitals**

13 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic is a serious health crisis in our City, State, and Nation;

14 **WHEREAS**, the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services has housed over 500 of our neighbors  
15 experiencing homelessness in local hotels to allow some to recover from COVID as well as to  
16 protect others from COVID;

17 **WHEREAS**, many more of our neighbors experiencing homelessness need protection from the  
18 ongoing crisis and need access to stable housing;

19 **WHEREAS**, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) may reimburse cities for  
20 temporary hotel stays for our neighbors experiencing homelessness now and throughout the  
21 health crisis; an

22 **WHEREAS**, there is interest for the public and the City Council to be briefed on the plan for  
23 our neighbors experiencing homelessness both in hotels and in encampments to be stably housed.

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

**Council Bill 21-0028R**

1       **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That the  
2 Council invites the Acting Director of the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services, the Director of  
3 the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the City Administrator, the Acting  
4 Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the advocacy  
5 groups Housing Our Neighbors and Homeless Persons Representation Project to brief and advise  
6 the City Council as to: the overall outcomes for neighbors experiencing homelessness who were  
7 able to reside in the hotels; what is next for them; assistance for those experiencing homelessness  
8 in encampments during the crisis; and the availability of programs to access housing.

9       **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the  
10 City Administrator, the Acting Director of the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services, the Director  
11 of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success, the Acting Commissioner of the  
12 Department of Housing and Community Development, the Executive Director of Housing Our  
13 Neighbors, the Executive Director of the Homeless Persons Representation Project, and the  
14 Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.