



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: A Pardon for Marshall "Eddie" Conway

FOR the purpose of requesting the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2011 Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly to introduce and secure adoption of Senate and House Resolutions urging the Governor to grant a pardon to Marshall "Eddie" Conway, and urging the Governor to act favorably upon the request of the Baltimore City Delegation.

Sponsors: Belinda Conaway, Warren Branch, William "Pete" Welch, President Young, Sharon Green Middleton
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CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Conaway
At the request of: Baltimore Branch of the NAACP, c/o/Tessa Hill-Aston, President
Address: 8 West 26th Street, Baltimore, MD 21218
Telephone: 410-366-3300

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
A Pardon for Marshall "Eddie" Conway

FOR the purpose of requesting the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2011 Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly to introduce and secure adoption of Senate and House Resolutions urging the Governor to grant a pardon to Marshall "Eddie" Conway, and urging the Governor to act favorably upon the request of the Baltimore City Delegation.

Recitals

On March 5, 2001 the Baltimore City Council adopted a resolution for the purpose of supporting the 2001 Maryland General Assembly's House Joint Resolution 24 that urged then-Governor Glendening to grant a pardon to Marshall "Eddie" Conway. The Resolution stated that Conway, a former member of the Baltimore Black Panther Party, was primarily convicted on the questionable and self-serving testimony of a jail house informant of killing one Baltimore City police officer and wounding a second officer, in 1969.

It held further that: "the request for a pardon for Mr. Conway must be evaluated both in terms of who testified against him and the context of the time period during which he was convicted. During the late 1960s, the opportunities and freedoms that black people enjoy today, while still not equivalent to those enjoyed by whites, were nearly nonexistent. Through the Freedom of Information Act, documents have revealed that Mr. Conway and his family were targets of J. Edgar Hoover's notorious and now infamous FBI COINTELPRO counterintelligence program. We now know that Mr. Hoover abused his power as FBI director to target black leaders, including members of the Black Panther Party, for both criminal investigations and assassinations.

During his 30 years in prison, Mr. Conway has been a model prisoner. Mr. Conway has helped to create educational programs and has been a leader in peaceful protest to secure better living conditions for all inmates at the Maryland House of Corrections, in Jessup. While Mr. Conway remains an advocate for dignity and social justice, he has also earned 2 associate of arts degrees and a bachelor of social science degree while holding down a full-time job in the prison system."

Despite support from political figures, community activists, civil rights groups, prisoners' rights groups, and many others, Marshall "Eddie" Conway remains incarcerated. On April 23, 2011, a rally was held outside of the U.S. Courthouse in the shadow of the statue of the great Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, commemorating Conway's 65th birthday and refocusing attention on his four-decade-long unjust imprisonment.

It is appropriate that this Governor revisit the case of Marshall "Eddie" Conway from the context of the present that allows for an enlightened examination of actions of a past age of social unrest, political upheaval, and racial dissonance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, This Body hereby requests the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2011 Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly to introduce and secure adoption of Senate and House Resolutions urging the Governor to grant a pardon to Marshall "Eddie" Conway, and urges the Governor to act favorably upon the request of the Baltimore City Delegation.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor; the Governor; the Baltimore City Delegation to the Special Session of the 2011 Maryland General Assembly; the Warden, Maryland Correctional Institute at Jessup; the President, Baltimore Branch NAACP; the Executive Director, Mayor's Office of State Relations; and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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