



City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Stokes

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Establishing a Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission

FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from Baltimore's tourism, entertainment, business, and heritage preservation communities to meet with the Baltimore City Council in a hearing to determine how best to fashion and establish a Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission, and to seek a source of designated funding for the Commission.

Recitals

Baltimore City is the birthplace and home to many of America's greatest African American public servants and national icons. Baltimore City has literally hundreds of historic sites that are in desperate need of increased awareness and appreciation, and in many cases in need of immediate preservation efforts, and should be recognized as national and local historic sites of interest to the citizens of the State of Maryland and to the nation's domestic and international tourism and preservation communities. Additionally, many of these sites are cared for by the nonprofit community to which funding sources are not widely known or readily available.

Historic anniversaries are another item of concern as Baltimore continues to celebrate and commemorate its history and heritage of certain individuals and dates and seemingly overlook or not have awareness of the other neglected and too often overlooked historic events that occurred in Baltimore City.

A Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission, properly staffed and funded, can alleviate this oversight and ensure that this essential part of Baltimore's history and heritage is not lost or forgotten, which deprives present citizens, and,

if not corrected, future generations of the knowledge of the achievements and contributions of people of African American descent to Baltimore's diverse history. Representatives from Baltimore's tourism, entertainment, business, and heritage preservation communities could work together on the commission to research, identify, catalog, link, preserve the history of Baltimore's African American community, and to share these findings with interested persons and organizations and with the nation's tourism industry as well as with tourism agencies of the City of Baltimore and the State of Maryland

Baltimore City remains a city of two distinct and unconnected locales. On one side of town there are multi-million dollar districts and destinations, multi-million dollar tourism sites, multi-million dollar Inner Harbor attractions and businesses including the National Aquarium, MD Science Center, Phillips Seafood, Spirit Cruises, Barnes & Noble, Bubba Gump, M&T Bank Stadium, Oriole Park at Camden Yards, Baltimore Horseshoe Casino, Harbor East, Fell's Point, Federal Hill, Mt. Vernon Cultural District, Power Plant Live, etc.

Yet, there are tourism deserts in Baltimore, historic sites are situated in tourist unfriendly locales, markers, plaques and signs are missing from historic buildings and districts, historic sites are facing deteriorating conditions, in need of landscaping, beautification, etc. These adverse conditions have a negative impact on the communities in which they exist and thus limit opportunities for Baltimore small businesses to engage in the City's \$3.5 billion tourism industry and restricts the ability of local artists and craftsmen to generate revenue and serve as pillars and positive influences in their own communities.

More could, and should, be done to celebrate and highlight the full range of what Baltimore has to offer from its rich history and cultural heritage. Establishing an African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission would be an important step towards this goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council calls on representatives from Baltimore's tourism, entertainment, business, and heritage preservation communities to meet with the Baltimore City Council in a hearing to determine how best to fashion and establish a Baltimore City African American Business, Tourism, Entertainment & Heritage Preservation Commission, and to seek a source of designated funding for the Commission.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the President & CEO of Visit Baltimore, the Director of Finance, the President of the Baltimore African American Tourism Council, the Executive Director of Baltimore Heritage, the Executive Director of Preservation Maryland, the President & CEO of the Baltimore Development Corporation, the President of the Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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