



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0003R, Version: 0

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Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember McCray

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **Informational Hearing - Baltimore's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan**

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore's healthcare community, and other interested parties before the Baltimore City Council to discuss Baltimore's COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Recitals

In December of 2020, Pfizer and Moderna were granted emergency use authorization of their respective COVID-19 vaccines. Subsequently, a rigorous distribution effort began to ship large amounts of the vaccines to states across the country. The efficacy rate of the Moderna vaccine is 94.1% and Pfizer's 95.0%, both requiring an initial shot and then from several to four weeks later, a follow-up booster shot.

Baltimore's residents have been struggling with the weight of the Coronavirus pandemic for 10 months, and although there is a vaccination to be distributed, the end to the pandemic seems uncertain. To date, the City has seen more than 32,000 COVID-19 cases, three-figure hospitalization numbers consistently, and more than 600 deaths. Within these 10 months, health, economic, and educational disparities have been exacerbated as the impact of COVID-19 hit marginalized communities the hardest. With the average median income at \$50,379 and 21% of the population being below the poverty line, a large portion of the City's residents can identify with the intensified struggle.

Given the added difficulty in pursuing the most basic necessities in life - income, education, and even human engagement and interaction - it is in the best interest of the City to rapidly disburse a vaccine to its residents, bringing the end to the virus closer. Data has shown that Black and Brown populations are twice as likely to test positive for the virus, and so a primary focal point for cities such as Baltimore is how to effectively manage outbreaks within those communities. Understanding the factors driving these disparities is vital to developing strategies to curb the disproportionate epidemics in minority communities.

Accordingly, a thorough explanation of the Health Department's plan for the disbursement of the vaccination to residents is necessary. It is especially imperative for the Health Department to have a specific engagement plan for lower-income communities, which have been hit quite hard and addressing the growing concerns many residents have about the safety and reliability of this vaccine.

Finally, the City is conscious of a new strain of Coronavirus that has been detected in the United States, and we should be prepared. To be sure, whether or not there are any effects this new strain may have on the vaccination disbursement plan, our citizens should be made aware.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Council invites representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore's healthcare community, and other interested parties before the Baltimore City Council to discuss Baltimore's COVID-19 vaccination plan.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Baltimore City Health Commissioner, the President of the Maryland Hospital Association, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.