



## Legislation Text

---

**File #: 08-0070R, Version: 0**

---

\* WARNING: THIS IS AN UNOFFICIAL, INTRODUCTORY COPY OF THE BILL.  
THE OFFICIAL COPY CONSIDERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL IS THE FIRST READER COPY.  
INTRODUCTORY\*

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL        R  
(Resolution)

Introduced by: President Rawlings-Blake

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning  
**Informational Hearing - Vector Control**

FOR the purpose of requesting the Commissioner of the Health Department, the Director of the Bureau of Vector Control, and the members of the Interagency Sweep Team to brief the City Council on the effectiveness of Vector Control Bureau activity in controlling the rat population in City neighborhoods, the success of outreach efforts in enlisting the citizenry in rat eradication efforts, the methods used to measure the efficacy of rat control and abatement efforts, and the level of coordinated, rat-density based, interagency strategic coordination and application for long-term control of the rodent population.

Recitals

The Bureau of Vector Control (VC) of the Baltimore City Health Department “provides services to residents by inspecting and treating sites suspected of having rodent infestation. Inspection and treatment services are provided in response to complaints received at the City’s 311 Call Center or Baltimore CitiTrack Service Request System. They are implemented via strike teams that coordinate targeted neighborhood sweeps. These sweeps are the result of a series of assessments that include meetings with neighborhood residents and community leaders.

Neighborhood sweeps are performed under a comprehensive rodent control initiative known as the Interagency Sweep Team comprising (1) Vector Control of the Health Department, (2) Housing Inspection and Property Maintenance of the Department of Housing and Community Development, and (3) Sanitation Police of the Department of Public Work’s Bureau of Solid Waste . Under this dual track approach, personnel from Housing or Public Works clean properties that have become overgrown with high grass and weeds, are full of trash and debris, or littered with unused materials or abandoned vehicles prior to Vector Control’s treating and baiting activities.

The most common rodent in the City and surrounding suburbs is the Norway Rat, also know as the Brown Rat. The nearly 3 million rodents in Baltimore are known to destroy, contaminate or eat a wide range of perishables from pet food and fresh food scraps and can gain entrance to a building through any opening larger than ½ inch across. Having exhibited a preference for living underground in burrows made most often alongside building structures, fence lines, walkways, patios, sheds, and under low decks, the Brown Rats will jump up to 3 feet and climb to find food or shelter.

Brown Rats typically live about 1 year, and females may have 4-7 litters of 6-12 young each year, with a total of 30 young expected to live to maturity per year. This is of particular concern for many reasons; most immediate is that rats are a major source of disease. In addition to playing hosts to parasites such as lice, fleas, and ticks, rats are linked to the spread of a number of infectious diseases. These diseases include: leptospirosis, toxoplasmosis, skin disorders, and more familiar diseases such as rabies, salmonella, and bubonic and pneumonic plagues.

In addition to the deleterious affects on the health and welfare of the residents of the City, rats are unwelcome and unsightly hosts to visitors and tourists. Further complicating the issue of rodent control is the fact that the rat population in Baltimore City has not been formally counted in over 50 years. At the introduction of City Council Resolution 07- 272 it was noted that “Baltimoreans have waged a long, intractable war against rodents. In the interest of winning that war, it is essential that the Council receive regular battlefield status reports from the VC agents on the front lines.” If we are to continue to grow as a City, attract new residents, and encourage citizens to invest where they live, it is imperative that we maintain our vigilance in controlling the rat population and mitigation against the negative and unwanted affects of the rat population in Baltimore City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Commissioner of the Health Department, the Director of the Bureau of Vector Control, and the members of the Interagency Sweep Team are requested to brief the City Council on the effectiveness of Vector Control Bureau activity in controlling the rat population in City neighborhoods, the success of outreach efforts in enlisting the citizenry in rat eradication efforts, the methods used to measure the efficacy of rat control and abatement efforts, and the level of coordinated, rat-density based, interagency strategic coordination and application for long-term control of the rodent population.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Commissioner of Health, the Director of the Bureau of Vector Control, the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development, and the Director of Public Works or their appropriate designees, the organizations listed in the Planning Department Directory of Community Associations, the Executive Director of the Baltimore Area Convention & Visitors Association, the Executive Director of the Baltimore Convention Center, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

dlr08-0252~intro/01Oct08  
ccres/vector/nf

dlr08-0252~intro/01Oct08  
????  
ccres/vector/nf