



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL

Introduced by: Councilmember Holton

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL concerning
Baltimore City's 10 -Year Plan to End Homelessness - A Call to Action

FOR the purpose of calling upon the citizens of Baltimore City to join the Mayor in attaining the goals set forth in The Journey Home: Baltimore City's 10 - Year Plan to End Homelessness; urging faith-based, student, fraternal, sororal, civic, youth, and other service organizations to identify the specific contributions they will provide to address the plight of the homeless; and encouraging all private citizens to volunteer their time, talent, and tangible resources to the action plan to end homelessness in Baltimore City by 2018.

Recitals

The Journey Home, a plan to end homelessness in Baltimore City by 2018, is the result of the work of the Civic Leadership Council and workgroups that provides a framework for creating housing opportunities for homeless individuals and families, for providing comprehensive and affordable health care, for increasing access to employment and public benefits, for increasing outreach and supportive services, and for preventing homelessness.

This action plan brings together the business, nonprofit, faith, and public sector communities to address the root causes of homelessness, a complex social and public health crisis that affects at least 3,000 Baltimore City residents who do not sleep in their own homes on any given night during the year, with 1000 of them meeting the federal definition of "chronically homeless", meaning that they have been homeless for over 1 year or have had at least 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years.

The action plan addresses the 4 factors that are primarily responsible for homelessness: lack of affordable housing; lack of affordable health care; low income; and lack of comprehensive services. The plan includes 14 goals and 48 specific actions, the highlights of which include:

- * Expanding "Housing First" to 500 units;
- * Obtaining priority Housing Choice Vouchers for chronically homeless non-elderly persons with disabilities;
- * Developing convalescent care beds for medically fragile homeless persons;
- * Expanding healthcare options for the uninsured;
- * Increasing access to employment and training for homeless persons;
- * Promoting a universal application for public benefits;

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- * Improving legal interventions for individuals and families at imminent risk of becoming homeless; and
- * Developing a 24-hour, year round shelter.

In order to implement The Journey Home, Baltimore Homeless Services will move from the Health Department to City Hall, reporting directly to the Mayor's office. An Advisory Board, comprising representatives from the Civic Leadership Council, Baltimore Homeless Services Board of Directors, Elected Officials, City and State Representatives, the Philanthropic and Business Sectors, the Provider and Faith Communities, and the United Way, will be established to advise and guide Baltimore Homeless Services in implementing the plan.

Full community involvement is the key to ending and preventing homelessness. The Journey Home will benefit greatly from volunteer services that have proven invaluable across the country in the nationwide effort to end homelessness, including: office and administrative services that support advocate agencies; assistance in special fund raising or conscious raising events; preparing food and performing maintenance and beautification work at area shelters; and speaking to help educate others in an effort to bring about the systemic and attitudinal changes necessary to prevent and end homelessness.

It is the responsibility of us all, not just those formally included in the plan, to assure that those least fortunate among us are provided a smooth "journey home".

SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That this Body calls upon the citizens of Baltimore City to join the Mayor in attaining the goals set forth in The Journey Home: Baltimore City's 10 - Year Plan to End Homelessness; urges faith-based, student, fraternal, sororal, civic, youth, and other service organizations to identify the specific contributions they will provide to address the plight of the homeless; and encourages all private citizens to volunteer their time, talent, and tangible resources to the action plan to end homelessness in Baltimore City by 2018.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the fraternities, sororities and/or student bodies of all universities, colleges, community colleges, and high schools located in Baltimore City, the Girl Scouts of America, the Boy Scouts of America, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc., and the organizations listed in the Planning Department Directory of Community Associations.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Resolution takes effect on the 30th day after the date it is enacted.

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