



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 Henry

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
**Request for State Action - Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Baltimore City Council
Confirmation of Appointments**

FOR the purpose of respectfully requesting the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2014 Maryland General Assembly to sponsor and secure passage of legislation to require that nominations by the Governor and Mayor for persons to serve on the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners be confirmed by the Baltimore City Council.

Recitals

In 1997, State legislation put into place a new City/State partnership in the governance of the Baltimore City Public School system in what State officials touted as a first step in addressing the fundamental problems within a system that consistently produced dismal academic performance, high absenteeism, and an appalling drop-out rate. The emergency departmental bill restructuring the management of Baltimore's public schools was contingent upon the State providing additional education funding to Baltimore and the State's 23 counties.

The management restructuring included replacing the existing board of school commissioners with a ten-member board appointed jointly by the Mayor and the Governor. The new board was given authority and responsibility for all functions relating to the public school system, including the establishment of a personnel system governing all employees and the adoption of regulations regarding school system procurement.

Under the provisions of the education partnership legislation, the 2002 General Assembly was required to deliberate and determine if the partnership should be terminated, modified, or extended. The result was the removal of "New" from the name of the Baltimore City of Board of Schools Commissioners, a requirement for the CEO to submit a new five-year master plan to the local board, by June 1, 2002, and a requirement for the local board to submit the plan to the State Board of Education by July 30, 2002, and to begin implementing the plan by August 30, 2002. The process for selecting the Board of School Commissioners remained unchanged, and the Board and CEO were still required to submit the schools' budget to the Mayor and City Council for approval.

Baltimore City has consistently maintained its fiscal commitment to Baltimore City Public Schools as exemplified in the City's current fiscal years budget. The City's Maintenance of Effort funding level increased by half a million dollars, to \$202.6 million. City operating support for BCPS totals \$279.9 million, including debt service on capital projects, retiree health benefits, and school crossing guards. The capital budget includes \$17 million for school construction and renovation.

As the school system goes through a critical period with leadership transition and the beginnings of the historic billion dollar school construction project, it is vital that the recent student gains be safeguarded and further improved upon. Accountability and community engagement will be key in determining the success of both the construction plans and the continued classroom reforms.

One of the best ways to hold schools and School Board members accountable is to share the responsibility for their appointment and tenure with those elected officials closest to the communities they serve - the members of the Baltimore City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That this Body hereby respectfully requests the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2014 Maryland General Assembly to sponsor and secure passage of legislation to require that nominations by the Governor and Mayor for persons to serve on the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners be confirmed by the Baltimore City Council.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the Maryland General Assembly, the President of the Maryland Senate, the Maryland House Speaker, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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