



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: President Young

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Informational Hearing - Proposed Elimination of Housing and Community Development's Childcare Program

FOR the purpose of calling on representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the Department of Finance, and the Mayor's Office of Human Services to appear before the City Council to discuss the proposed elimination of HCD's successful half-century old childcare program, and the impact that the proposed elimination would have on longtime City employees and at-risk families.

Recitals

Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has operated a childcare program designed to help low-income families take advantage of opportunities to advance themselves through education or work for the past half century. Currently, 30 City employees care for 130 to 160 children from mostly very low-income families at centers on Baltimore's East and West sides. Families in the program pay for childcare on a sliding scale based on their income level.

Although the program is well regarded and has helped many young families through the decades, its current generation of parents was recently shocked and outraged to learn that it has been slated for closure. Parents have been protesting the proposal to "consolidate" HCD's childcare program with the privately operated but government financed Head Start program by eliminating all funding for the HCD program and transferring it to Head Start operators to pay for extended Head Start hours.

This plan assumes that children in the HCD program will be able to enter Head Start facilities instead, but there are no guarantees that Head Start slots will actually be found for them, and the eligibility criteria for the two programs are not identical. Further, even if slots are found for the displaced children, the closure of the HCD facilities, intentionally located near educational institutions and employers, could leave struggling parents with no childcare options near their schools or jobs.

Equally troubling, this plan would eliminate the positions of 30 longtime City employees, mostly teachers who have devoted much of their working lives to educating our littlest and most vulnerable residents, without any realistic prospect of finding alternate positions for them.

Ending a successful program that families rely on in this manner in order to transfer funds to outside providers raises serious questions about the potential impacts on our at-risk communities and dedicated City workers. These questions deserve to be discussed publicly, through a hearing before the City Council, before any final decisions are made

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council calls on representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Finance, and the Mayor's Office of Human Services to appear before it to discuss the proposed elimination of HCD's successful half-century old childcare program, and the impact that the proposed elimination would have on longtime City employees and at-risk families.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Housing Commissioner, the Director of Finance, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Human Services, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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