



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0112R, 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: Councilmember Henry

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning
Worker Cooperatives Month in Baltimore - October 2018

For the purpose of declaring the month of October 2018 to be Worker Cooperatives Month in Baltimore.

Whereas, Worker cooperatives are local businesses that are democratically governed, provide wages and benefits above the industry average, develop leadership and management skills, and build wealth for community residents; and

Whereas, Some of the earliest worker cooperatives in the U.S. can be traced back to Baltimore - e.g., after a 1794 strike, Baltimore shoemakers organized themselves into a worker-owned shoe production facility; and

Whereas, There are over 300 worker cooperatives across the U.S., with over 3,500 worker-owners, with annual revenues exceeding \$400 million; and

Whereas, Worker Cooperatives generally employ community residents, are more likely than other businesses to rely on sustainable business practices, and give back to the community, with the profits being more likely to remain and circulate within the local economy; and

Whereas, A 2017 National Center for Employee Ownership (NCEO) study found that employee ownership results in markedly higher median household net worth, greater access to benefits at work (e.g., sick leave, vacation time, etc), and a greater sense of job security; and

Whereas, Worker cooperatives foster greater equity - the average pay ratio between the lowest and highest paid employee in a Fortune 500 company is 341:1, while in a worker cooperative it is rarely more than 4:1; and

Whereas, Since profits do not go to distant investors, but go directly to workers, worker cooperatives enable community residents to build sizeable assets and anchor wealth within neighborhoods; and

Whereas, Baltimore, like cities across the nation, is facing a “silver tsunami”, i.e., the anticipated retirement of Baby Boom business owners who own roughly half of all U.S. small businesses with employees, *translating to about 6,000 businesses in Baltimore employing more than 100,000 workers*. The vast majority (85%) of these owners do not have succession plans. Working with owners to transition their businesses to employee ownership could be a key strategy to save vibrant local businesses while boosting their positive

impact on our local economy; and

Whereas, Employee-owned businesses have greater productivity and growth and lower failure rates than traditionally structured businesses, and they are ideal enterprises to help stabilize and strengthen neighborhood economies.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Baltimore City Council declares the month of October to be Worker Cooperatives Month.

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