



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
Investigative Hearing - Fees - Public Use of Reservoirs

FOR the purpose of requesting the Director of Public Works to report to the Council on recreation activities at the Lock Raven, Prettyboy, and Liberty Reservoirs; to detail the average usage per season by activity; to report on any fees currently charged for recreational activities; and to compare the fees charged by Baltimore City with the fees charged by surrounding jurisdictions and the State of Maryland for the same or similar usage.

The Baltimore City Department of Public Work's website Safeguarding Our Reservoirs, states in part that Baltimore has the best-tasting, cleanest, purest drinking water in the country and is committed to keeping it that way. The Department oversees the operation of the watersheds of Loch Raven, Prettyboy, and Liberty Reservoirs, protecting these vital supplies of our drinking water and providing a natural environment for recreation.

The Department of Public Works, together with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, oversees 477 square miles of watershed. Within the reservoirs there are 44 species of fish, and boating and fishing on our reservoirs are favorite pastimes for many. The responsibilities of those using the reservoirs are contained in a booklet for anglers and boaters called the Pocket Guide to Boating and Fishing.

The Guide advises users that:

- Fishing at all 3 City reservoirs requires a valid Maryland State Fishing License.
- Fishing licenses are available at most Maryland sporting goods stores.
- Persons under 16 do not require fishing licenses.
- No fishing fees are charged by Baltimore City or Baltimore County.

While City officials do not keep an official record of where the people who frequent the reservoirs reside, the perception is that most of the anglers are not residents of Baltimore City. Information presented in The Abell Report, that in 2005 Baltimore was home to 205,544 citizens who don't have access to an automobile, would support this supposition. At the time, the number of persons who did not own or have access to an automobile equaled 32% of the City's population.

Given the recent economic downturn, it is reasonable to assume that the number of City residents without access to automobiles has grown. At least a third of our residents do not have transportation to the amenities available to others at City-owned facilities. Now is the appropriate time to consider having those fortunate anglers from surrounding subdivisions contribute to the dwindling coffers that are supported by embattled Baltimore City's taxpayers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Director of Public Works is requested to report to the Council on recreation activities at the Lock Raven, Prettyboy, and Liberty Reservoirs; to detail the average usage per season by activity; to report on any fees currently charged for recreational activities; and to compare the fees charged by Baltimore City with the fees charged by surrounding jurisdictions and the State of Maryland for the same or similar usage.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Director of Public Works, the Director of Finance, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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