



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Clarke and Holton

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
December 21, 2011 - National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day

FOR the purpose of declaring December 21, 2011 as National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day in Baltimore City to bring attention to the plight of the homeless, to pay tribute to those who continue to live under such perilous conditions, and to mourn the passing of those homeless persons who have tragically lost their lives on the streets of our nation's cities.

Each year since 1990, on or near the first day of winter and the longest night of the year, National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), National Consumer Advisory Board (NCAB) and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) has co-sponsored National Homeless Persons' Memorial day 'to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness and to remember our homeless friends who have paid the ultimate price for our nation's failure to end homelessness.'

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2010 annual homeless assessment report to Congress, released June 14, 2011- according to the latest assessment, the number of homeless persons in the U. S. held steady between 2009 and 2010, despite the economic downturn. However, the number of homeless persons in families has increased by 20% from 2007 to 2010, and families currently represent a much larger share of the total sheltered population than ever before.

Counting Matters:2011, by Morgan State University School of Architecture + Planning, a report submitted to the Mayor's Office of Human Services shows that:

- Baltimore's homelessness situation is on an upward trend. In eight years, the homeless population swelled from 2,681 in 2005 to 4,088 in 2011, an increase of 1,407 individuals. Particularly concerning is the change in the last census years. The rate of homelessness increased from 13.9% to 19.6%.
- Baltimore's Homeless Management Information System recorded 1,772 individuals who checked into homeless shelters on the census date in 2011. Of this population, 17.6% or 311 individuals were children and 83% were adults.

A significant percentage of these children (76.9%) were ten years old and younger.

· There has been a slight increase of the number of veterans since 2009. An increase of 26 sheltered and 6 unsheltered veterans were counted in 2011.

· The three top health concerns that impact the homeless population in the City of Baltimore are substance abuse, mental health, and chronic health.

A separate survey focused on homeless youths, which is evaluated by the Center for Adolescent Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, found that the population of homeless young people has similarly risen 135 percent since 2007, from 272 to 640.

Although some of the increases found in these studies can be explained by improved survey efforts, it is clear that homelessness in Baltimore is on the rise rather than declining and remains a serious problem affecting far too many of our fellow citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council hereby declares December 21, 2011 as National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day in Baltimore City to bring attention to the plight of the homeless, to pay tribute to those who continue to live under such perilous conditions, and to mourn the passing of those homeless persons who have tragically lost their lives on the streets of our nation's cities.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the President & CEO of Health Care for the Homeless, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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