



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
Baltimore City's Current and Future Solar and Other Renewable Energy Plans

FOR the purpose of reiterating the Council's support for the City's stated policy of promoting the use of solar and other renewable energy, and inviting representatives from the agencies best positioned to implement that policy to appear before it to discuss Baltimore's current and future solar and other renewable energy plans.

Recitals

As part of the Sustainability Plan adopted by the Council in March of 2009, Baltimore City has a stated policy of promoting the use of solar and other renewable energy sources. However, it is not clear what steps the City is currently taking to put this policy into effect to maximize the generation of renewable energy within Baltimore.

The time is ripe to comprehensively review the City's approach to renewable energy because changing technology, together with a number of once-in-a-lifetime efforts currently underway in seemingly unrelated areas, present opportunities to significantly increase renewable energy generation in Baltimore. It is important that we don't miss out on these opportunities to reshape Baltimore's energy landscape for the better.

The current comprehensive rewrite of the City's Zoning Code represents a once-in-a-generation chance to examine how well the City's current land use laws encourage large or small scale renewable energy generation. As just one example, the City should be acting to encourage people to establish rooftop and carport solar panels, the latter of which are high enough that cars are able to park underneath and be protected from the elements, and it is not clear whether the current laws provide a supportive enough structure for this activity or if changes should be made. It's important to establish a clear picture of the legal obstacles to renewable energy so that appropriate changes can be made to overcome these obstacles, and the broader structure of the City's Zoning Code can be designed to reflect renewable energy concerns.

Similarly, the massive billion dollar school construction and rehabilitation project kicking off shortly represents an

opportunity to re-imagine the school system's use of renewable energy. If buildings are planned from the ground up to take advantage of the opportunities that renewable energy generation can provide for greener, more efficient and self-sufficient structures, a real impact can be made on the environment, future school energy costs, and students' awareness of renewable energy.

Beyond these significant opportunities, it is important to periodically review the City's efforts to promote renewable energy and to compare these efforts to the whole gamut of possibilities that steadily advancing renewable energy technology continues to open up. In order to ensure that the City's commitment to expanding renewable energy use goes beyond words and has the widest possible impact, the full range of policies that can encourage or discourage renewable energy use needs to be constantly reexamined.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council reiterates its support for the City's stated policy of promoting the use of solar and other renewable energy, and invites representatives from the agencies best positioned to implement that policy to appear before it to discuss Baltimore's current and future solar and other renewable energy plans.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Director of General Services, the Director of the Office of Sustainability, the CEO of Baltimore Public Schools, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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