



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 13-0136R, **Version:** 0

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INTRODUCTORY\*

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL        R  
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Henry and Branch

### A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

#### A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning **Investigative Hearing - Death of Tyrone West in Police Custody**

FOR the purpose of calling on the Police Department and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to explain the reasons behind the abnormally long time being taken to determine the cause of Tyrone West's death in police custody on July 18th, and to inform the City Council of the current status of the investigation into this disturbing incident.

#### Recitals

Exactly four months ago today, Tyrone Antonio West died in police custody. Beyond that, there is little certainty as to what exactly transpired on July 18th, 2013.

Witness and police accounts agree that there was an altercation involving Mr. West and multiple City police officers following a traffic stop on that date. Accounts vary about the nature of the altercation, and no clear picture has emerged about what caused the unspecified "medical distress" that police say led to Mr. West's death.

In the months since his death, the officers involved in the incident have been suspended, and the Police Department's leadership has vowed to get to the bottom of what happened. But no police findings have yet been released. And the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner has so far failed to announce a cause of death. The West family has been left with no more information than they had more than 100 days ago.

This prolonged silence is frustrating and unacceptable. It leaves everyone involved - Mr West's family, the suspended officers, and the affected communities - stuck in limbo with no idea what may happen next and no way to move forward. Continued delay in discussing the case also inevitably raises questions about the integrity of the investigation in communities scarred by past police abuses and undermines the public's trust in the Police Department.

National standards call for cause-of-death determinations to be made within 90 days, and results are often

available well before that. The public - and especially Mr. West's family - has a right to know why this determination has been delayed long past the expected date, and where the investigation into Mr. West's death stands.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council calls on the Police Department and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to explain the reasons behind the abnormally long time being taken to determine the cause of Tyrone West's death in police custody on July 18th, and to inform the Council of the current status of the investigation into this disturbing incident.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Police Commissioner, the Chief Medical Examiner, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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ccres/TyroneWest/tw

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