



City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Legislation Text

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* **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 Stokes

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning

Genocide Awareness Month - April 2019

For the purpose of recognizing April as Genocide Awareness Month.

Whereas, During the Second World War, Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent, coined the term “genocide” to describe a coordinated plan of action aimed at the destruction of the foundations of life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating a group itself, for example, by obliterating a group’s political and social institutions, culture, language, national feelings, religion, and economic existence, and destroying the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and the lives of individuals belonging to the group; and

Whereas, Following the Holocaust, on December 9, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 260(III)A, the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, declaring genocide to be a crime under international law, and defining genocide to include the commission of certain acts, including killing members of the group, causing bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about a group’s physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures to prevent births within the group, and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group, with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, national, ethnic, racial, or religious groups; and

Whereas, Genocide and mass atrocities are crimes that have, in many instances, been perpetuated before and after the Holocaust, including in Armenia, Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan, and that are currently being perpetuated in Syria and Myanmar; and

Whereas, Baltimore City is also home to people who have endured genocide and mass atrocities in their countries’ origin; and

Whereas, The history of the United States of America is informed by acts of genocide and mass atrocities that have been perpetuated in this land, including the genocide of indigenous people, the enslavement of African and African-American people, and racial terror lynchings; and

Whereas, All acts of genocide, mass atrocities, and identity-based violence leave a legacy of trauma and inequality that must be healed and resolved, in order for a society to move forward together; and

Whereas, Together We Remember is an organization dedicated to ending all forms of identity-based violence, including genocide, through remembrance vigils that encourage communities to face historical traumas and take peaceful action to address them through dialogue, education, technology, and advocacy; and

Whereas, Baltimore City condemns and desires to combat all acts of genocide and identity-based violence and to counteract attitudes of intolerance, racism, antisemitism, hatred, and extremism that enable mass violence; and

Whereas, Expert bodies have found that, in order to prevent future genocides and mass atrocities, effective prevention measures must be implemented before a crisis erupts and that educating the public can help protect individual rights and promote a culture of lawfulness and moral courage that will help prevent future genocides and hate crimes; and

Whereas, Educating the public about the nature and progression of mass violence, from dangerous speech to mass genocide, and commemorating victims and survivors of all forms of identity-based violence, including the adoption of a Genocide Awareness Month resolution, are effective tools that will further these goals.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Council recognizes the month of April of each year as Genocide Awareness 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.