



Legislation Text

File #: 12-0076R, **Version:** 0

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Branch

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning **Informational Hearing - Mayor's Office of Emergency Management**

FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (MOEM) to inform the Baltimore City Council and the citizens of Baltimore about the activities of this agency and how these activities may help protect Baltimore from the impact of natural and man-made disasters.

The Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (MOEM) evolved from Baltimore's Civil Defense program that was established to prepare and protect citizens from nuclear attack, during the time of the "Cold War", which started in the 1950's.

In 2002, after the great Howard Street Tunnel fire, in 2001, and after the events of "9/11" in that same year, Mayor Martin O'Malley moved the office from the Department of Public Works to the Fire Department. In 2008, under Mayor Sheila Dixon, the Office of Emergency Management was incorporated into the Mayor's Office, while it administratively remains part of the Fire Department. Today the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management is concerned with preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters.

According to MOEM's City website, on a day-to-day basis, its primary function is to implement programs that prepare the City for major emergencies. It is responsible for citywide interagency preparedness by ensuring that the City's overall emergency plans integrate the procedures and resources of all City agencies and outside organizations. MOEM also serves as the link between the City and other entities - regional, State, federal, nonprofit, and private sector partners - for emergency planning and operations. The Mayor's Office of Emergency Management also manages the Homeland Security and Preparedness Coordinating Committee, and it has created community preparedness programs that train neighborhood teams to cope with disasters.

In the past few years, Baltimore City has experienced its share of natural disasters. They range from major snowfalls in the winter of 2010, the derecho in June of 2012, and hurricanes, the latest of which, Hurricane Sandy, resulted in flooding, loss of electricity, the closing of schools and City government except for emergency personnel, and the closing of all roads in Baltimore City.

The Mayor's Office of Emergency Management provides on its website information about preparedness measures for citizens and for City businesses, as well as information about such things as disaster relief, severe heat, hurricanes and other severe storms, and hazardous materials incidents; however, a question remains as to how that information may be provided to the many citizens who are not "digitally connected". They, too need access to information that may help them to survive disasters.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That representatives from the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (MOEM) are invited to inform the Baltimore City Council and the citizens of Baltimore about the activities of this agency and how these activities may help protect Baltimore from the impact of natural and man-made disasters.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Director of Emergency Management, the Preparedness Program Manager of the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.

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