



City of Baltimore

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

Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Rawlings Blake

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Informational Hearing - Baltimore City Gang Violence Reduction Plan

FOR the purpose of requesting the Executive Director of the Baltimore City Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to present to the City Council The Baltimore City Gang Violence Reduction Plan, as submitted to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, describing Baltimore City's public health and law enforcement strategies for reducing violence and presenting a comprehensive approach for combating the growing problem of gang violence in our neighborhoods.

Recitals

"Maryland Gangs Information and Prevention", a website presented by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, presents information on local youth gangs that originate in a particular neighborhood and locally operated gangs with national gang affiliation. For Baltimore City, it is reported that hundreds of gangs exist, "including youth gangs that operate in neighborhoods or schools and drug gangs. Youth gangs are motivated by a sense of brotherhood, more than just as an organization to sell drugs. Many youth gangs are generational; fathers or uncles were members of gangs, and then their sons or nephews join as they grow up. Children join these gangs for many reasons: to have a sense of belonging and friendship; to gain protection and respect; and the opportunity to make money through the drug trade."

"The vast majority of youth gangs are neighborhood gangs composed of 8 to 15 youth who focus their activities in a specific housing area. These gangs are responsible for street level drug sales, opportunistic robberies, and assaults and do not hesitate to use violence to protect their drug turf. There are probably hundreds of such gangs in the city. A smaller proportion of gangs follow the "culture" of nationally recognized gangs such as Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), Bloods, and Crips. These gangs may use the colors, clothing, and tattoos of the national gang; however, their membership and criminal activity are entirely local. No reliable statistics are available to determine how much of the crime in Baltimore City is committed by these street gangs."

"School gangs exist in a limited number of schools in Baltimore. These gangs are school based and are responsible for robberies, assaults, and intimidation/bullying in some schools. These gangs operate mainly in the school and in the surrounding neighborhoods before and after school."

"A significant number of gangs are primarily motivated to sell and distribute drugs. These gangs operate as drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) and are generally responsible for a larger portion of serious crime in Baltimore than are street gangs. Drug gangs are primarily motivated to make money, are more likely to be controlled by older males, and are more willing to use extreme violence to protect their drug market. The U.S. Attorney's Office in Baltimore has targeted a number of these drug gangs because they are responsible for a high level of violence in the city."

" In July 2004, three members of the Lexington Terrace Boys were sentenced to life in prison for the murder of nine people and the distribution of crack cocaine. The same month seven men from the North Avenue Boys were indicted for drug conspiracy and firearms charges related to a series of shootings and murders from November 2000 through May 2001. These two cases are just some examples of the violence drug gangs are capable of committing. Also, drug gangs often use youth gangs to distribute drugs and act as enforcers on their turf."

Because of the proliferation of gang activity in Baltimore City and the threat of increased gang-related crime and violence, the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) awarded a grant to the Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice to develop an approach to address this threat to the health and safety of our citizens. The Baltimore City Gang Violence Reduction Plan is contained in a document that describes the City's strategies for reducing violence that requires a citywide collaborative effort that includes local, state, and federal agencies, community faith-based organizations, business groups, neighborhood associations and residents, advocacy groups, academic institutions, and youth.

The strategies presented in this document are of paramount importance to the future of the City of Baltimore. As stewards of the City, it is critical that the Council be included at the genesis of Baltimore's response to the predatory gangs infiltrating our neighborhoods.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Executive Director of the Baltimore City Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is requested to present to the City Council The Baltimore City Gang Violence Reduction Plan, as submitted to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, describing Baltimore City's public health and law enforcement strategies for reducing violence and presenting a comprehensive approach for combating the growing problem of gang violence in our neighborhoods.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the Maryland General Assembly, the Executive Director of the Baltimore City Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Baltimore Police Commissioner, the Baltimore City State's Attorney, the Baltimore Health Commissioner, the CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools, the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board Youth Council Ad-Hoc Committee on Youth Violence, the Baltimore City Youth Commission, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families, the organizations listed in the Planning Department Directory of Community Associations, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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