



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: President Rawling-Blake

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Legislative Oversight - Baltimore Police Department

FOR the purpose of requesting the Baltimore Police Commissioner to report to the City Council on the effect of overtime spending budget cutbacks on crime prevention; and on the efficacy of restructuring the present formation of police districts as well as reporting methods of minor crimes in order to shorten response time and to provide better service to the citizenry.

Recitals

This past year Baltimore City addressed a continually worsening economy and accompanying reductions in State aid by imposing drastic across-the-board spending cuts that required City agencies to cut spending by more than 12%. And while public safety agencies budgets had to impose less-severe cuts, the Police Department was instructed to curtail overtime spending that had consistently exceeded budgeted amounts in past fiscal years.

To address the budget crisis, the Police Department disbanded several specialty units and attempted to curtail overtime spending, actions, it has been speculated, which may have contributed to the worst November homicide rate in 9 years. The media reported that Baltimore's deadliest month of 2008 coincided with substantial reductions in overtime spending that resulted in shifts across the City being short of personnel.

Last year, homicides were reduced to the lowest level since the 1980s, which was the steepest one-year decline in more than forty years. However, in recent months, killings have increased and our city's progress has been threatened. Sadly, as of Thursday, February 05, 2009, murders have increased by 63% over this time last year.

It is difficult to ascertain if there is a correlation between overtime spending and the crime rate. An official briefing will serve to update the Council on the effects of budgetary cutbacks. In addition, it would help to determine whether the effects of restructuring the current district, post and sector configurations as well as whether implementing online and telephone reporting of minor crimes would make the police more efficient in responding to the citizenry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Baltimore

Police Commissioner is requested to report to the City Council on the effect of overtime spending budget cutbacks on crime prevention; and to report on the efficacy of restructuring the present formation of police districts in order to shorten response time to police-involved incidents.

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

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