



City of Baltimore

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

Legislation Text

File #: 07-0707, Version: 0

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL

Introduced by: President Rawlings-Blake, Councilmembers Mitchell, Holton, Curran, Welch

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL concerning
Parren J. Mitchell: 1922-2007 - A Champion of Social Justice

FOR the purpose of paying tribute to Parren J. Mitchell, Baltimore's native son, Maryland's 1st black Congressman, and America's social conscience, expressing appreciation for his many contributions to achieving a more equal and just society for all, and providing for a special effective date.

Recitals

Parren J. Mitchell, elected in 1970 to the first of 8 terms in Congress from the 7th district after holding positions in 2 Mayoral administrations and a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus, worked dauntlessly throughout his 16 years of representing Baltimore to ensure that minority businesses received an equitable share of tax-funded public works projects and to bring attention to instances of job discrimination on Baltimore's waterfront and at the Social Security Administration headquarters, in Woodlawn.

The younger brother of Clarence J. Mitchell, Jr., the NAACP lobbyist and Civil Rights icon, committed his life to attaining racial equality upon hearing his elder brother's account of the lynching of a black man in the South, and he never wavered from that goal, serving as Executive Director of the Baltimore Community Action Agency for 2 administrations where he mediated relations between civil rights groups and local government and made a name for himself in Washington, D.C., as a most effective anti-poverty administrator.

Elected to Congress during times of social unrest caused by opposition to the Vietnam War and the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, he and 12 black members of Congress boycotted President Nixon's State of the Union address, and shortly after, as a member of the newly-formed Congressional Black Congress, he was part of a historic meeting with the President.

A member of the Committee on the Budget and the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee, Mitchell became chairman of the Committee on Small Business at the beginning of the 97th Congress, in 1981, and he used his position to advocate legislation that promoted minority-owned businesses. In order to provide these businesses with more opportunity to procure contracts awarded by the Defense Department, he successfully fought to remove departmental limits on the number of companies permitted to bid for spare parts contracts.

In 1996, a group of successful business owners, committed to cultivating future leaders in the minority community, formed the Parren J. Mitchell Foundation for Education and Talent Development. Members, many of whom were mentored by Parren J. Mitchell, set out to establish an organization that would "continue the Congressman's legacy of effective leadership that serves the greater good and ensures equality for all."

True to his own words, Parren J. Mitchell not only talked the talk, he walked the walk - "If you believe in fighting racism, you make a commitment for the rest of your life. There's no getting off the train."

SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the City of Baltimore hereby pays tribute to Parren J. Mitchell, Baltimore's native son, Maryland's 1st black Congressman, and America's social conscience, and expresses our appreciation for his many contributions to achieving a more equal and just society for all.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Resolution takes effect on the date it is enacted.

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