Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Request for Federal Action - Prevent Chemical Disasters
FOR the purpose of calling on the Environmental Protection Agency to move quickly to finalize a strong rule requiring chemical plants and refineries to use the safest cost-effective chemicals and technology available in order to protect the millions of Americans, including many Baltimoreans, living in the shadows of potentially dangerous chemical facilities.

Sponsors: Bill Henry, Brandon M. Scott, Mary Pat Clarke, James B. Kraft, President Young, Eric T. Costello, Sharon Green Middleton, Helen L. Holton, Carl Stokes, William "Pete" Welch, Rochelle Spector, Nick Mosby, Warren Branch, Robert Curran, Edward Reisinger

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/21/2015	0	City Council	Adopted	
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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Henry

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
Request for Federal Action - Prevent Chemical Disasters
FOR the purpose of calling on the Environmental Protection Agency to move quickly to finalize a strong rule requiring chemical plants and refineries to use the safest cost-effective chemicals and technology available in order to protect the millions of Americans, including many Baltimoreans, living in the shadows of potentially dangerous chemical facilities.

Recitals

It is vital to the safety and security of millions of Americans that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) move quickly to finalize a strong rule requiring chemical plants and refineries to use the safest cost▲effective chemicals and technology available. The EPA has an historic opportunity to protect the 100 million people across the U.S. who live, work, study, and play in the shadow of dangerous chemical facilities.

The EPA has announced plans to propose a chemical security rule in September 2015. The rulemaking process takes longer than 12 months▲usually closer to 20 months. Waiting until September to begin the rulemaking process means that the EPA must work with particular expediency, or this critical public safety rule will be vulnerable to Congressional Review Act attacks by Congress, and could be subject to a "midnight rules challenge" by the next President.

We in Baltimore City, along with many other localities across the county are working to protect the people who live, work, and go to school in our neighborhoods, but we need more help. There have been over 350 chemical disasters across the nation in just the past two years, causing 79 deaths and sending nearly 1,500 victims to the hospital. Closer to home there have been at least 10 chemical incidents and disasters in Maryland over the past five years, and at least 4 chemical incidents and disasters in Baltimore over that same time span. Baltimore also hosts at least 32 potentially vulnerable chemical facilities.

To prevent more unnecessary incidents and make these chemical plants less attractive terrorist targets, we need a strong EPA rule requiring facilities to use the safest cost▲effective chemicals and technology. A strong rule should also incorporate assistance and funding to cities across the country to make similar safety improvements, and co▲enforce the federal standards.

We respectfully urge the EPA to use its authority to expedite the chemical security rule, so it will be finalized in time to avoid challenges. As representatives of the citizens of Baltimore, we ask the EPA to think of the citizens who live with this deadly risk every day, and work quickly to finalize a strong rule.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, that the Council calls on the Environmental Protection Agency to move quickly to finalize a strong rule requiring chemical plants and refineries to use the safest cost▲effective chemicals and technology available in order to protect the millions of Americans, including many Baltimoreans, living in the shadows of potentially dangerous chemical facilities.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Mayor, the Honorable Members of the Maryland House and Senate Delegations to the 114th Congress, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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ccres/ChemDisaster/MDPIRG:tw

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