



Legislation Text

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The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: President Young

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning Investigative Hearing - Physical Status of the Municipal Conduit System

For the purpose of calling on representatives from the Department of Transportation and its Conduit Section Engineering group to appear before the City Council to discuss the physical condition of the Municipal Conduit System, its current reach, maintenance plans, and any plans to expand the system.

Recitals

Baltimore's Municipal Conduit System is a significant, but often poorly understood, asset for the City. Its more than 700 miles of tunnels carry electrical, telephone, and fiber optic lines to homes and businesses throughout the city, allowing private companies access to customers that would otherwise be all but impossible. In recent years it was the subject of an unsolicited \$100 million purchase offer, and may possess a much higher value than that were it to be sold.

Continued City ownership of this system presents Baltimore with many opportunities to use it to ensure citizen access to utilities, profit from user fees, or leverage it to make the deployment of new services such as a municipal-owned broadband network easier and cheaper. However, maintaining these tunnels, some of which are well over a century old, is also a significant City responsibility. Neither the opportunities nor responsibilities inherent in the conduit system are as well known as they could be.

In order to ensure that this asset is being used as effectively as possible, it is important that the public, and their representatives on the City Council, be more fully informed about the physical condition of the conduit system, its current reach, and any plans to expand it. Areas of concern or potential opportunity should also be discussed and considered. Only when a full picture of this asset beneath our feet is regularly presented can we be certain that the City is getting everything it can out of the system now and not letting its value decline from neglect or lack of attention.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Council calls on representatives from the Department of Transportation and its Conduit Section Engineering group to appear before the Council to discuss the physical condition of the Municipal Conduit System, its current reach, maintenance plans, and any plans to expand the system.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Director of Transportation, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.