



City of Baltimore

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

Legislation Text

File #: 20-0245R, Version: 0

* **Warning:** This is an unofficial, introductory copy of the bill.
The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: President Scott and Councilmember Burnett

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **The United States Postal Service and Voting**

For the purpose of calling on Congress to pass the Delivering for America Act and expressing concern about Maryland's current voting plan.

Recitals

Whereas, On March 5, 2020, Governor Larry Hogan declared a State of Emergency in the State of Maryland, and, on March 19, 2020, Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young declared a State of Emergency in Baltimore City;

Whereas, Both states of emergency related to the imminent public health emergency posed by COVID-19. COVID-19 is a devastating disease that presents a significant risk of bodily harm and possible death to anyone who contracts the disease - particularly the most vulnerable members of society with pre-existing health conditions;

Whereas, As of August 17, 2020 there have been 5,488,763 confirmed cases and 172,146 deaths of COVID in the United States. 100,715 cases and 3,641 deaths have been confirmed in Maryland, while 13,425 cases and 443 deaths have been confirmed in Baltimore City;

Whereas, On August 14, 2020, President Trump discussed withholding funding to the United States Postal Service so that the system would not be equipped to handle mail-in, absentee voting in November;

Whereas, Maryland will hold a general election on November 3, 2020;

Whereas, The City of Baltimore is currently seeing significant delays in mail service from the United States Postal Service;

Whereas, Marylanders should not have to choose between their right to vote and their right to living a healthy life;

Whereas, Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of our democracy, and we must ensure that all citizens, regardless of political affiliation, zip code, or identity, are able to exercise their right to vote;

Whereas, The City Council recognizes ensuring the right to vote is a compelling government interest;

Whereas, Under the State’s current proposal, voters will be required to complete an application by mail before they can receive an absentee ballot to vote by mail;

Whereas, Baltimore City successfully conducted a primarily vote by mail election on June 26, 2020;

Whereas, The State Board of Elections approved a statewide elections plan on August 7, 2020;

Whereas, Voter turnout in Baltimore City was the highest in the State of Maryland;

Whereas, On August 16, 2020, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi called on the U.S. House of Representatives to return to Washington DC to pass the “Delivering for America Act”, which would ensure the United States Postal Service maintains their normal service standards;

Whereas, The Delivering for America Act would prohibit the United States Postal Service from making changes to service standards or operations that were in place on January 1, 2020, until the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the City Council of Baltimore calls on the United States Congress to pass the Delivering for America Act;

And be it further resolved, That the City Council expresses concern about the State’s current plan, which puts a greater reliance on the mail system given the statements made by President Trump and the corresponding impact on services residents are experiencing.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, United States Representative Carolyn B. Maloney, the Maryland Congressional Delegation, the Governor of Maryland, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.