



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: Councilmember Stokes

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning
Banning Contracts with Georgia Due to Voter Suppression

For the purpose of urging the Mayor and Board of Estimates to refuse to permit municipal officials to travel to the State of Georgia on City business and to refuse to contract with the State of Georgia or businesses based in Georgia until Georgia's newly-enacted voter suppression law is repealed.

Recitals

Whereas, The right to vote is fundamental to the function of healthy democracy;

Whereas, Members of minority groups, in particular African Americans, have historically been the target of legislation meant to deprive them of the free and fair exercise their right to vote;

Whereas, In 2020, unprecedented numbers of Georgians, especially African Americans, turned out to vote in general and special elections;

Whereas, Georgians elected Joe Biden to the Presidency of the United States and Reverend Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossof to the United States Senate - President Biden, Senator Warnock, and Senator Ossof are all members of the Democratic Party;

Whereas, Following these elections, prominent members of the Republican Party from Georgia and elsewhere, *including former President Donald Trump, persistently made baseless, wholly unsubstantiated claims that the election results were illegitimate and the result of pervasive fraud;*

WHEREAS, Georgia's Republican-led legislature passed and, on March 25, 2021, the Governor of Georgia signed into law a series of voting restrictions that are expected to

significantly impair Georgians' right to vote;

WHEREAS, The new Georgia law suppresses voting in a variety of ways including undue burdens on the ability of voters to vote absentee or cast ballots by mail, restricts access to ballot drop boxes, restricts the ability of local and state election administrators to provide voters access to ballots, changes the administration of the Georgia's primary elections, and prohibits volunteers from offering food or beverages to voters forced to wait in long lines to cast a ballot;

WHEREAS, These restrictions are intended and expected to disproportionately disenfranchise African Americans;

WHEREAS, President Biden has labeled this new voter suppression law "Jim Crow in the 21st Century";

WHEREAS, Previous Mayors of Baltimore have used their authority to set fiscal and administrative policies for the City that advance the causes of justice and equity, including prohibiting travel by municipal officials to certain states while unjust policies remained in place; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Estimates is responsible for overseeing fiscal policy, making procurement decisions, and approving contracts on behalf of the residents of Baltimore.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the City Council urges the Mayor and Board of Estimates to refuse to permit municipal officials to travel to the State of Georgia on City business and to refuse to contract with the State of Georgia or businesses based in Georgia until Georgia's newly-enacted voter suppression law is repealed.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Comptroller, the City Solicitor, the Director of the Department of Public Works, the City Administrator, the Clerk of the Board of Estimates, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

