



Legislation Text

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Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Stokes

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **Informational Hearing - Addressing Youth Violence in Baltimore City**

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore City Police Commissioner; the State's Attorney for Baltimore City; the Chief Academic Officer of the Baltimore City Public School System; the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Wellness & Community Health from the Baltimore City Health Department; the Chief of Police for the Baltimore City School Police; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development; the Director of the Mayor's Office of African-American Male Engagement; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Performance and Innovation; and interested members of the Baltimore City Youth Commission to come before the City Council to discuss the increase in youth violence across the city; and the risk factors that are driving these incidents.

On January 1, 2022, the first two victims of homicide for this year were 16-year old Desmond Canada and 17-year old Bernard Thomas. Over the last 15-years there have been approximately 220 youth under the age of 18 killed as a result of violence. In 2021 more than 40 youth under the age of 18 were victims of non-fatal shootings with many of the perpetrators of these crimes being members of the same age cohort. In a report that was published by the Center for Children's Law and Policy, a Youth Diversion Assessment was conducted specifically for Baltimore City, which showed that during fiscal year 2018, 40 percent of Baltimore City juvenile intakes were for misdemeanor offenses, 30 percent were for felony offenses excluding crimes of violence, and the remaining 30 percent were for crimes of violence.

Studies show that there is a gradual progression of delinquent behavior for youth and young adults who end up in the criminal justice system. Home and school-based behavior can be used as early warning signs of potential delinquent or criminal acts. A report generated by the Maryland Department of Education showed that during school-year 2017-2018 5.4 percent of students enrolled in Baltimore City Public Schools were suspended or expelled, with the highest rate of suspensions spanning between children in the 4th through 9th grades.

Globally, 84 percent of youth homicide victims are males, and most perpetrators are males too. For every young person killed by violence, even more sustain injuries that require hospital treatment. Statistics show that firearm attacks end more often in fatal injuries than assaults that involve fists, feet, knives, and blunt force objects. Youth homicide and non-fatal violence not only contribute greatly to the global burden of premature

death, injury, and disability, but also have a serious, often lifelong, impact on a person's psychological and social functioning. Preventing youth violence requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the social determinants of violence, such as income inequality, rapid demographic and social change, and low levels of social protection.

In this hearing the City Council would like a briefing on:

1. The prior year statistics relating to homicides, non-fatal shootings, arrest, and other part one crimes concerning youth 17 years of age and younger;
2. How we can build early warning systems to identify at-risk youth and young adults between the ages of 9 through 14 years old;
3. How we can strengthen home and school-based violence prevention programs;
4. How we can create a Youth Coordinating Officer within each police district;
5. Creative ideas on how to re-establish the Police Athletic League program through Public - Private partnerships;
6. The content being discussed, and the performance metrics being established for YouthStat meetings so that partnering agencies can pinpoint critical issues affecting youth and young adults; and
7. What programming will be put in place to mitigate against these issues.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Baltimore City Council invites the Baltimore City Police Commissioner; the State's Attorney for Baltimore City; the Chief Academic Officer of the Baltimore City Public School System; the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Wellness & Community Health from the Baltimore City Health Department; the Chief of Police for the Baltimore City School Police; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development; the Director of the Mayor's Office of African-American Male Engagement; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Performance and Innovation; and interested members of the Baltimore City Youth Commission to come before the City Council to discuss the increase in youth violence across the city; and the risk factors that are driving these incidents.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Police Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department; the State's Attorney for Baltimore City; the Chief Academic Officer of the Baltimore City Public School System; the Deputy Commissioner of Youth Wellness & Community Health from the Baltimore City Health Department; the Chief of Police for the Baltimore City School Police; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development; the Director of the Mayor's Office of African-American Male Engagement; the Director of the Mayor's Office of Performance and Innovation; and interested members of the Baltimore City Youth Commission and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.