

Council Pres. Pro. Tem Brown:

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City of Detroit: Resolution to Support Public Lighting Authority Legislation

- WHEREAS** An estimated 35,000 streetlights in Detroit – 40 percent of the total – are broken, relegating city residents and visitors to lengthy periods of darkness.
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- WHEREAS** Inoperable streetlights and the resultant darkness compromise public safety in Detroit, whose residents routinely rate rampant crime as the city's foremost public policy concern.
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- WHEREAS** The Declaration of Rights in the Detroit Home Rule Charter asserts: "*The City shall provide for the public peace, health and safety of persons and property within its jurisdictional limits.*"
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- WHEREAS** Its deficit-laden budget and weak bond rating make it impractical, if not impossible, for the City of Detroit to amass independently the hundreds of millions of dollars needed to fix its antiquated public lighting system.
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- WHEREAS** Bills before the Michigan Legislature seek to abet the public lighting challenges confronting Detroit by permitting the Detroit City Council to create a Public Lighting Authority that could bond for resources needed to repair the municipality's beleaguered lighting system and contract with electric utility leaders for operation / management of it.
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- WHEREAS** The package – comprising House Bills 5688, 5705 and Senate bill 970 – would affirm Detroit ownership of its public lighting system, while empowering a five-person board to govern the Public Lighting Authority.
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- WHEREAS** The Mayor of the City of Detroit would appoint two people to the board and the Detroit City Council, two; the Mayor will appoint one member which will be confirmed by City Council; all five members would have to be Detroit residents; and at least three board members must have technical expertise in either engineering, law or accounting.
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- WHEREAS** Said legislation aims to help Detroit limit prospective borrowing costs by allowing the city to earmark \$12.5 million of its Utility Users Tax revenue for repayment of would-be Public Lighting Authority bonds.
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- WHEREAS** Until the prospective Public Lighting Authority Bonds are retired, the package would dedicate 0.2 percent of Detroit's 2.4 percent residential income tax rate, and 0.1 percent of its 1.2 percent non-residential levy, to the Detroit Police Department to replace Utility Users Tax money that currently is statutorily dedicated to hiring and retaining Detroit police officers.
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- WHEREAS** The legislation also would promote stability in Detroit general fund revenues by both eliminating boilerplate prescribing annual reductions in the city's income tax rates and mitigating Detroit general fund subsidization of its municipal lighting system.
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- WHEREAS** The goal of this permissive legislation is to arm Detroit government with a tool to fix an emergent deficiency in a key city service and not to interfere with future decisions by elected leaders concerning street-lighting; **Now Therefore Be It**
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- RESOLVED** That the honorable Detroit City Council respectfully asks the Michigan Legislature to pass House Bills 5688 and 5705, and Senate Bill 970; and **Be It Finally**
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- RESOLVED** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Rick Snyder; Detroit Mayor Dave Bing; House Speaker Jase Bolger; Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville; Representatives Tim Bledsoe, Lisa Howze, Alberta Tinsley-Talabi, Maureen Stapleton, John Olumba, Fred Durhal, Jimmy Womack, Tommy Stallworth, Shanelle Jackson, Harvey Santana, David Nathan and Rashida Tlaib; and Senators Coleman Young Jr., Bert Johnson, Morris Hood, Virgil Smith and Tupac Hunter.

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