



## STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE

Baltimore City Council President

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*Better Schools. Safer Streets. Stronger Neighborhoods.*

### MEDIA ADVISORY:

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## CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT CALLS FOR TEXT/EMAIL CRIME ALERTS

### *Rawlings-Blake urges Police Commissioner to investigate system used by D.C. Police*

BALTIMORE—Today, Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake will introduce a City Council Resolution urging the Baltimore Police Commissioner to investigate the possibility of instituting a citywide text messaging system to alert residents and businesses about criminal activity. Text and e-mail alerts could provide real-time information about robberies, missing persons, auto theft and violent crime.

“Baltimore needs to look at new innovative tools to get more of our citizens and local businesses engaged in the fight against crime,” Rawlings-Blake said. “An email and text messaging alert system will help provide important, timely information about criminal activity directly to our citizens.”

In November 2008, the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department Police launched “D.C. Police Alert” a text/email system that offers a short recap of the crime, a description of the suspect and instructions to call 911 if they see anyone fitting the description.

Rawlings-Blake noted that by creating a similar system, city agencies could help provide important information to citizens during a major crisis or emergency. “A text/email rapid alert system would also bolster our efforts to be prepared for natural disasters and homeland security related incidents,” Rawlings-Blake said. Washington’s alert system was implemented through a federal homeland security grant.

Rawlings-Blake suggested that the system could also improve relations between the Baltimore Police Department and citizens. “This idea is as much about transparency as it is about communication,” Rawlings-Blake said. “A text messaging system could help create a better dialogue between our police and communities, which, over time will also help to build trust.”

**WHO:** City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

**WHAT:** At a meeting of the Baltimore City Council, Rawlings-Blake will introduce a Resolution urging the Baltimore Police Commissioner to investigate the possibility of instituting a citywide text messaging system to alert residents and businesses about criminal activity.

**WHERE:** Du Burns Council Chambers, 4th Floor, City Hall, 100 North Holliday Street.

**WHEN:** Today, March 16, 2009 at 5:00pm.

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