

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia Office of the Chief Clerk Room 402, City Hall Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 250025)

RESOLUTION

Honoring and congratulating Jackie Pettyjohn, the “First Lady of SEPTA,” on her retirement after forty years as SEPTA’s first female train engineer.

WHEREAS, Jaqueline Y. “Jackie” Pettyjohn first set out on her trailblazing path as the first woman locomotive engineer when she was hired by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) on August 22, 1984; and

WHEREAS, Pettyjohn studied English but never found work in her field of study. Instead, she found a job opening at SEPTA through an ad in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. A few weeks later, the job was hers, and she began training towards a successful promotion to the position of Locomotive Engineer; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, Pettyjohn was promoted to being the first female engineer on the commuter rail lines after a very rigorous training program, enduring many challenges as the lone female in engineer training; and

WHEREAS, Despite the pressure of being SEPTA’s first female locomotive engineer, Pettyjohn fell in love with the job and stayed on, balancing her work and family lives despite the demanding hours of the night shift; and

WHEREAS, Through her determination to stay on, Pettyjohn once said in an interview “It’s the passengers, they gave me a source of inspiration”; and

WHEREAS, While working as a locomotive engineer, she went back to school to become a certified mortician, and later married her late husband Victor, raising a beautiful family of four while she continued to work fulltime as a train engineer as well as mortician; and

WHEREAS, Pettyjohn is known for her humble demeanor and positive “I will” attitude. These traits have made her a cherished figure at SEPTA and among her union brothers and sisters; and

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WHEREAS, Pettyjohn was extremely loyal to her union, her employer, and the community she served. She represented Locomotive Engineers nationwide in the Teamsters Women's Conference; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, Pettyjohn was named a "pioneer" by SEPTA as she and another female trailblazer at the agency were honored for their accomplishments by Women in Transit; and

WHEREAS, Her safety and performance record with SEPTA is an exceptional one. She maintained a perfect attendance record over forty years of service to the Philadelphia region without a single operating rule infraction; and

WHEREAS, After forty years at SEPTA, in January 2025 Pettyjohn completed her final trip from Philadelphia International Airport to Suburban Station. She was met at the station by throngs of supporters alongside her family, a testament to the high regard those closest to her hold her. As SEPTA continues to confront operator shortages and unavailability, appreciation must be shown for dedicated civil servants like Pettyjohn who happily clock in every day for decades to ensure a critical public good is made available for Philadelphians writ large; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors and congratulates Jackie Pettyjohn, the "First Lady of SEPTA," on the occasion of her retirement after forty years as SEPTA's first female train engineer.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to Jackie Pettyjohn as evidence of the true and sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-third day of January, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Young

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Young, Ahmad, Bass, Brooks, Driscoll, Gauthier, Gilmore Richardson, Harrity, Jones, Landau, Lozada, O'Neill, O'Rourke, Phillips, Squilla and Thomas