

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 030202)

RESOLUTION

Mourning the death and honoring the memory of Speaker Matthew J. Ryan.

WHEREAS, Matthew J. Ryan was born in 1932 in Philadelphia, worked in his father's local wholesale seafood business, attended St. Joseph's Preparatory School, graduated from Villanova University in 1954, served his country as a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps, and graduated from Villanova Law School in 1959; and

WHEREAS, As a resident of Edgmont, Delaware County, Matthew Ryan was first elected to the 168th Legislative District in 1962, and served that District continually for the last forty years, the second-longest tenure in the 320-year history of the State House, a career that spanned eight gubernatorial and nine presidential administrations; and

WHEREAS, Thirty-two of Matthew Ryan's forty years were served in leadership capacities, he was first elected Speaker in 1981, and he was again elected Speaker in 1995 and has served continuously since then, having just been re-elected for a sixth term to that position in January, making him the longest serving Speaker in Pennsylvania history; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Ryan was widely respected on both sides of the political aisle, known for handling cantankerous floor debates with an even hand and a quick gavel, and in addition to guiding the Republican agenda through the House, was always a pragmatic dealmaker with a legendary Irish wit, and while his name was not attached to many landmark pieces of legislation, he was a veteran of a thousand legislative and budget deals that have had a profoundly positive influence on the Commonwealth as well as the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Ryan passed away March 29th, just a month before his 71st birthday, at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, after a year long struggle with stomach cancer; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 030202 continued

WHEREAS, Governor Rendell stated that “Matt Ryan demonstrated that you could provide strong and effective leadership without resorting to destructive partisanship, and I can attest he was a tireless fighter for the citizens of this Commonwealth and will leave a great void in both the Legislature and the lives of those who knew him”; and

WHEREAS, House Majority Leader John Perzel called the Speaker “a great man and true leader of Pennsylvania. He’s been a tireless public servant and has a very long list of those he truly helped in need”; and

WHEREAS, This Council greatly appreciates all that this colossal figure has done for Philadelphia over the last four decades, and conveys its deepest condolences to Speaker Ryan’s extended family; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we mourn the death of Speaker Ryan and honor his life and his legacy.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 030202 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution,
Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the third of April, 2003.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember O'Neill for Councilmember Kenney

Sponsored by: Councilmembers O'Neill, Nutter, Clarke, Krajewski, Rizzo,
Blackwell, Reynolds Brown, Council President Verna, Ortiz,
Goode and Miller

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 030202 continued