

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 050021)

## RESOLUTION

Celebrating the life and honoring the memory of G. Fred DiBona, Jr.

WHEREAS, G. Fred DiBona, Jr., a son of South Philadelphia who became President and CEO of Independence Blue Cross and a leading force among Philadelphia's business executives for more than three decades, died January 11th at the age of 53 after a courageous fight with cancer; and

WHEREAS, Born in South Philadelphia, G. Fred DiBona, Jr. was the son of legendary Common Pleas Court Judge, G. Fred DiBona, Sr. and the former Rose D'Amico. Following graduation from South Philadelphia High School and Davis and Elkins College, Mr. DiBona earned a law degree from the Delaware School of Law and immediately embarked on a career that, at every stop, left its mark; and

WHEREAS, Mr. DiBona's career in the business of the Philadelphia region was indeed remarkable. From untangling the stifling bureaucracy of the city's zoning board, to invigorating the local Chamber of Commerce, to transforming a struggling health insurance plan into one of the nation's leading managed care companies, G. Fred DiBona gained a national reputation as a decisive leader. During the fifteen years he led Independence Blue Cross, Fred DiBona guided the company through nothing less than a complete transformation. Under his leadership, Independence Blue Cross—the same company that had been hemorrhaging members by the thousands each month when he took over—increased its revenues from \$1.3 billion to nearly \$10 billion, and its membership from 2.1 million to nearly 3.5 million members at the close of 2004; and

WHEREAS, G. Fred DiBona often credited the 9,000 associates of IBC for making the company a success, and he had a special relationship with them. To them, he was simply "Fred." He greeted them on the elevator, traded opinions about the Eagles and asked about their families. Frequently during his illness, Mr. DiBona thanked the associates of IBC for their outpouring of support and prayers. He said they gave him the strength to continue his fight; and

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RESOLUTION NO. 050021 *continued*

WHEREAS, As the success of Independence Blue Cross grew, so did the national profile of its chief executive. Mr. DiBona served consecutive terms as Chairman of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, the country's largest association of private health insurers. He was member of the Harvard Health Policy and Management Executive Council, a think tank group at the Harvard School of Public Health and his business and management expertise was often sought out by CEOs and leaders of companies and not-for-profit organizations ranging from neighborhood-based organizations to Fortune 500 companies. At the time of his death, Mr. DiBona was serving on the boards of Aqua America Inc., Crown Holdings, Inc., Exelon Corporation, The GEO Group, Inc. and Tasty Baking Company. In addition, he served on the boards of a number of not-for-profit organizations including the Peter Nero and Philly Pops Board which he chaired; and

WHEREAS, Business fortunes only provided one measure of his IBC's success; equally important under Mr. DiBona's leadership was IBC's dedication to a Social Mission — a commitment to investing IBC's people and resources in the overall health of the Philadelphia region. For Mr. DiBona, Social Mission took on a variety of forms— from providing 150,000 needy children with health insurance over 15 years through the Caring Foundation, which he founded during his first year at IBC to granting \$6 million in financial assistance to the region's Charitable Medical Clinics; and

WHEREAS, Fred DiBona believed all good companies commit to giving back to their communities—and he often saluted the leaders of Philadelphia's business community for their long tradition of giving back. Honoring that tradition, he was a willing and effective fundraiser— as well as benefactor—for a variety of worthy causes. In 1996, he served as Chairman of the annual fund raising campaign of the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and was credited with reversing a six-year downward financial slide by raising nearly \$50 million. In tribute to the success of this campaign, Mr. DiBona was named United Way CEO of the Year for 1996. In April 2001, his contributions to the overall civic life of the region were recognized with the William Penn Award from the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the highest award given by the business community; and

WHEREAS, G. Fred DiBona achieved a level of success that gave him access to national and world leaders. But despite numerous opportunities to accept lucrative positions in companies headquartered in other parts of the nation, Mr. DiBona elected to stay here at home, in Philadelphia, and close to the Jersey Shore he loved. Such was the role of family in Mr. DiBona's life: whether he was speaking of life in South Philadelphia with his parents, or life in Villanova with his wife, Sylvia, and children, Fred and Christine, Fred DiBona had a ready selection of stories, and he told them in voices ranging from tender to excited to proud. Fred was a grateful son, a devoted husband and a proud father; and

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*RESOLUTION NO. 050021 continued*

WHEREAS, G. Fred DiBona, Jr. truly earned his seat of honor among the leaders he so admired. We shall miss him dearly; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby celebrate the life and honor the memory of G. Fred DiBona, Jr.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to his wife, Sylvia and his two children as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

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*RESOLUTION NO. 050021 continued*

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-fifth of January, 2005.

Anna C. Verna  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Kenney for Council President Verna

Sponsored by: Council President Verna, Councilmembers DiCicco, Mariano, Rizzo, Goode, Tasco, Blackwell, Miller and Reynolds Brown