

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 250136)

RESOLUTION

Honoring and celebrating the life of Brenda Harris, one of the Founding Members of the Coalition to Abolish Death By Incarceration (CADBI), and a Black woman whose profound love of her communities improved the lives of her neighbors and people across Philadelphia, on the occasion of Black History Month.

WHEREAS, Brenda Harris was born February 4, 1957, in Philadelphia and passed away on June 1, 2024. She had three kids – a set of twins and Jenny Love Harris. She was the youngest of 8 children, graduating from Simon Gratz High School before working a range of jobs, from cleaning to SEPTA to sewing; and

WHEREAS, Her loved ones fondly remember Brenda's love of sewing, particularly to improve her home and to help her kids. Brenda even made Jenny's high school prom dress. Although Brenda always claimed she would be unable to finish a given sewing project, she would always get it done – sewing was one of her favorite activities, along with taking her two sisters shopping every week; and

WHEREAS, Brenda woke up committed to bringing her son Jerome Harris, who is incarcerated for life, back home. She went to sleep thinking about it. She went to every meeting she could until COVID happened, then she went to Zoom meetings; and

WHEREAS, Everyone who knew Brenda knew that she loved everybody, did not have an evil bone in her body and would give you the shirt off her back if she could. But there's nobody Brenda loved quite the way that she cherished her grandkids. Jenny's middle son even lived with her for a time because he never wanted to go home; and

WHEREAS, Brenda always wanted to get stuff done – whatever she had to do, she took care of it. She was always on time and never late for anything and brought her love and care. She never missed a CADBI meeting or rally. She just wanted to see her son come home and tried to hold on until he came; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 250136 continued

WHEREAS, Brenda would want the loved ones of incarcerated people to be heard. To do everything they can to get their people home. And for incarcerated people to read every book in the library, to do everything they can to get home. She wanted every person to be heard, to come home; and

WHEREAS, Her work to end death by incarceration lives on through the community she helped build up. She was widely known as a pillar of the movement to humanize and decarcerate and universally recognized as a shining light while she lived. Although she has passed, that light still shines; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors and celebrates the life of Brenda Harris, one of the Founding Members of the Coalition to Abolish Death By Incarceration, and a Black woman whose profound love of her communities improved the lives of her neighbors and people across Philadelphia, on the occasion of Black History Month.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That two Engrossed copies of this resolution be presented to Jenny Love Harris, the daughter of Brenda Harris, and to the Coalition to Abolish Death By Incarceration as an expression of the gratitude and admiration of the Council of the City of Philadelphia.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 250136 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twentieth day of February, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Phillips, Gauthier, Thomas, Landau, Young,
O'Rourke and Bass