

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 070281)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and acknowledging Michael Coard, Esquire for his tireless work as a founding member, primary researcher, and official spokesperson of Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC) that played a prominent and essential role in the recently successful demand for the creation of a historic commemoration to the African descendants enslaved by President George Washington at America's first "White House," which was located at the site of the new Liberty Bell Center at Sixth and Market Streets in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC) is a broad-based organization of African American historians, activists, attorneys, elected officials, religious leaders, media personalities, and other tax-paying voters who are descendants of the victims of the greatest holocaust in the history of humankind; and

WHEREAS, President George Washington owned 316 Africans and African descendants at his Mount Vernon, Virginia plantation and transported to the aforementioned Philadelphia, site nine of them, whose names are Austin, Christopher Sheels, Giles, Hercules, Joe Richardson, Moll, Oney Judge, Paris, and Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Their enslavement existed at the very time when and at the very location where the Founding Fathers were proclaiming that "all men are created equal"; and

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WHEREAS, There were no plans by the Interior Department, the National Park Service, or Independence National Historical Park to acknowledge the sacrifice, struggle, and great economic contributions of those enslaved African descendants until Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC) initiated relentless community activism; and

WHEREAS, That community activism consisted of nearly five years of indisputable meticulous research, voluminous letter-writing campaigns, massive vocal demonstrations, numerous strategically-organized meetings, and many well-timed media blitzes, as well as substantial persuasive documentation to the United States Department of Interior, the National Park Service, and Independence National Historical Park, for the “appropriate commemoration” of those enslaved African descendants, including the highlighting of slave quarters, at the aforesaid Philadelphia site; and

WHEREAS, The efforts of Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC), led by Michael Coard, Esquire, have helped to secure \$1.5 million from the Mayor of the City and County of Philadelphia and \$3.6 million from two local United States Congressmen for the “President’s House” project of which the slavery commemoration is a major and historic component; and

WHEREAS, The Council of the City and County of Philadelphia adopted Resolution Number 020521 in September 2002 to support “equitable economic participation” in opportunities arising from the construction of this project; and

WHEREAS, On the 21st day of March, 2007, the Mayor of the City and County of Philadelphia and the Superintendent of Independence National Historic Park commenced an archaeological dig as the first step in the project construction; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA, On this 12th day of April, 2007, that we hereby recognize and acknowledge Michael Coard, Esquire for his outstanding service as a founding member, primary researcher, and official spokesperson of Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC), which fought relentlessly

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and successfully for the slavery commemoration that will have absolutely historic significance for the United States of America, for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and especially for the City and County of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Mr. Michael Coard as evidence of the sincere sentiments 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 twelfth of April, 2007.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Miller for Councilmember Tasco and Blondell Reynolds Brown

Sponsored by: Council President Verna, Councilmembers Tasco, Reynolds Brown, Greenlee, DiCicco, Goode, Rizzo, Savage, O'Neill, Kenney, Blackwell, Campbell, Clarke, Ramos, Kelly and Miller