

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 100082)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and honoring the life of Representative John Patrick Murtha who was the first Vietnam combat veteran to serve in Congress and Pennsylvania's longest-serving House member.

WHEREAS, Representative Murtha was a political powerhouse and mentor in the US House of Representatives whose work greatly benefited Philadelphia and the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Born in West Virginia and raised in Mount Pleasant, PA, Representative Murtha was first elected to the legislature in 1974 representing the 12th Congressional District; and

WHEREAS, He spent his 36 years in Congress working with Democrats and Republicans members and leadership alike to broker deals and help shape policy and influence federal spending; and

WHEREAS, Serving as chairman to the House Appropriations defense subcommittee, Representative Murtha advised his colleagues on defense matters and helped direct funding to his district; and

WHEREAS, Representative Murtha attended Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, PA but left in his second year, 1952, to enlist in the Marine Corps where he worked as a drill sergeant; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from the University of Pittsburgh in 1962 with a degree in economics, he rejoined the Marines and served as an officer in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967. In recognition of this service, he received a Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts for wounds suffered in combat, and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry; and

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WHEREAS, Upon returning from Vietnam, he challenged Republican U.S. Representative John P. Saylor for the 12th Congressional seat. Mr. Murtha lost, but was then elected to the Pennsylvania General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, After five years in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, Mr. Murtha ran in a special election for the 12th Congressional seat after Representative Saylor passed away. He won by 200 votes; and

WHEREAS, Representative Murtha won the heart of his district during a flood that struck Johnstown and the surrounding towns in 1977. He personally orchestrated aid and relief efforts and visited affected areas by helicopter. Later, he worked to steer flood-recovery dollars to his district; and

WHEREAS, Representative Murtha's legacy is evident throughout southwestern Pennsylvania where many roads and buildings are named in his honor demonstrating his highly-regarded reputation and connection to the area; and

WHEREAS, Representative Murtha was a great friend, colleague and mentor to many including Congressman Robert Brady who commented, "There is no smarter, tougher, kinder, funnier, or more revered member of the House of Representatives;" and

WHEREAS, President Obama said in a statement, "His passion for service was born during his decorated career in the United States Marine Corps, and he went on to earn the distinction of being the first Vietnam War combat veteran elected to Congress. Jack's tough-as-nails reputation carried over to Congress, where he became a respected voice on issues of national security;" and

WHEREAS, Representative Murtha leaves his wife of 55 years, Joyce, his daughter Donna, twin sons John and Patrick, and three grandchildren; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby recognize and honor the life of Representative John Patrick Murtha who was the first Vietnam combat veteran to serve in Congress and Pennsylvania's longest-serving House member.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Joyce Murtha as evidence of the sincere sentiments and recognition 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 February, 2010.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Kenney and DiCicco, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Blackwell and Green

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Kenney, DiCicco, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Blackwell, Green, Greenlee, Goode, Miller, Reynolds Brown, Krajewski, O'Neill, Jones and Kelly