

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 230290)

## RESOLUTION

Designating April 9, 2023 “Paul Robeson Day” to honor occasion of the 125th anniversary of the birth of actor, singer, lawyer, scholar and activist Paul L. Robeson, Esq.

WHEREAS, Paul Leroy Robeson, Esq. was the son of the Rev. William Drew Robeson and Maria Louisa Bustill Robeson, born on April 9, 1898, who descended from an illustrious family that included Cyrus Bustill, a baker who supplied bread to George Washington’s troops at Valley Forge and Humphrey Morrey, first mayor of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Paul Leroy Robeson graduated valedictorian from Rutgers University and also received his law degree from Columbia University Law School; and

WHEREAS, Paul Leroy Robeson was a renowned singer known for his signature song “Ol’ Man River,” the first African American to play OHELLO on Broadway and the star of Hollywood and independent movies and performed in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Paul Leroy Robeson was a social activist who spoke out in favor of human rights in the United States and underdeveloped countries, and against global oppression, earning him the respect and friendship of many luminaries and

WHEREAS, To honor the monumental life and legacy of Paul L. Robeson, on February 23, 2023, The Council of the City of Philadelphia voted to rename the 4900 Block of Walnut Street “Paul L. Robeson Way; and

WHEREAS, Paul Leroy Robeson, was branded a Communist sympathizer in his own country, was brought before the U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee for his perceived Communist leanings, was stripped of his passport, limiting his right to travel and denied him the ability to make a living; and

WHEREAS, Paul Leroy Robeson, following the death of his wife Eslanda Cardozo Goode Robeson, came to Philadelphia to spend his final years with his sister, Marian Robeson Forsythe, and following his passing the house at 4951 Walnut Street was named in his honor as well as

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Paul Robeson High School for Human Services along with many libraries and institutions across the country honoring his name; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, hereby declares April 9 2023 “Paul Robeson Day” to honor the exemplary life and legacy of Paul Leroy Robeson as a superb actor, singer, activist, orator, lawyer, author, linguist, athlete, scholar, and true American Hero.

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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 Thirteenth day of April, 2023

Darrell L. Clarke  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Gauthier

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Gauthier, Driscoll, Brooks, Squilla, Bass, Lozada, Vaughn, Gilmore Richardson, Phillips and Thomas