

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 130126)

## RESOLUTION

Honoring the proud history and one hundred year anniversary of the 1913 founding of the freedom fighting civilian militia, known as the “Irish Volunteers.”

WHEREAS, The Irish Volunteers was a military organization established in 1913 by Irish nationalists. It was ostensibly formed in response to the formation of the Ulster Volunteers in 1912, and its declared primary aim was "to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to the whole people of Ireland". The Volunteers included members of the Gaelic League, Ancient Order of Hibernians and Sinn Féin, and, secretly, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). Despite their qualms with the United Kingdom, the Irish Volunteers rose to the occasion to challenge the more urgent oppressor with over 90% enlisting in the 10th and 16th (Irish) Divisions of the British Army. The Volunteers also fought for Irish liberation in the famous 1916 Easter Rising which firmly altered the course of history in favor of those slighted by the thumb of colonialism and imperialism across the globe; and

WHEREAS, Contrary to the pro-British revisionist version of history familiar with most Americans, the Irish Volunteers, later the Irish Republican Army, share a common ideological ancestry as America’s founding mothers and fathers, and the civilian militias that rose up to fight against their British oppressors during the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812; and

WHEREAS, With the obvious and unforgivable exceptions of British civilian deaths caused by a small few and falsely committed in the name of Irish nationalism, the Irish Volunteers were a nationwide volunteer movement to organize militarily after countless years of failure to achieve Irish Independence through diplomatic means; and

WHEREAS, Home Rule for Ireland dominated formal political debate between the two countries since Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone introduced the first Home Rule Bill in 1886 but freedom and self-governance for the Irish people was, like so many other conquered territories and peoples, yearned for over many centuries; and

# City of Philadelphia

*RESOLUTION NO. 130126 continued*

WHEREAS, On 28 September 1912 at Belfast City Hall just over 450,000 pro-British Irish Unionists signed the Ulster Covenant to resist the granting of Home Rule. This was followed in January 1913 with the formation of the Ulster Volunteers composed of adult male Unionists to oppose the passage and implementation of the bill by force of arms if necessary. The establishment of the Ulster Volunteers was, according to Eoin MacNeill instigated, approved, and financed by English Tories one of the leading British Parties; and

WHEREAS, Founded as a measure of last resort, MacNeill himself would approve of armed resistance only if the British launched a campaign of repression against Irish nationalist movements, or if they attempted to impose conscription on Ireland following the outbreak of the First World War, in such a case he believed that they would have mass support; and

WHEREAS, Irish nationalist leaders, empowered by the initial efforts of the Irish Volunteers begun in 1913, declared independence for the free Republic of Ireland on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April, 1916 which was later ratified in 1919, recognized in 1922 following the Irish War of Independence from the United Kingdom and the ratification of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. Initially a dominion within the British Empire called the Irish Free State, a new constitution and the name of "Ireland" were adopted in 1937. In 1949 the remaining restraints of the British monarch were removed and Ireland was rightly declared a free named, called the "Republic of Ireland"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby recognize the brave sacrifices and calls for freedom made by the founders of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 which gave birth to the successful liberation of the Irish People from the United Kingdom. All people yearning to be free deserve to share in our own proud legacy of American Independence.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Irish Community of Philadelphia as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

# City of Philadelphia

*RESOLUTION NO. 130126 continued*

# City of Philadelphia

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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 twenty-first of February, 2013.

Darrell L. Clarke  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Kenney

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Johnson, Goode, Bass, Quiñones Sánchez, Greenlee, Jones, Oh, O'Brien, Green, Reynolds Brown, Blackwell, Tasco and Henon