



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

BILL NO. 240370

Introduced May 2, 2024

Councilmembers Phillips, Gilmore Richardson, Bass, Council President Johnson, Lozada, Landau, Jones, Gauthier, Brooks, Ahmad, O'Rourke, Thomas, Harrity, Driscoll, Squilla, O'Neill and Young

**Referred to the
Committee on Public Property and Public Works**

AN ORDINANCE

Renaming and designating the property commonly referred to as the West Oak Lane Library, located at 2000 East Washington Lane, as the "Dwight Evans Library of West Oak Lane" in the City of Philadelphia.

Whereas, Dwight Evans was born on May 16, 1954, in Philadelphia and raised in the Germantown and West Oak Lane sections. Dwight attended Philadelphia public schools and graduated from Germantown High School in 1971; and

Whereas, Dwight's unwavering commitment to education led him to the Community College of Philadelphia, and later, he graduated from La Salle University. His academic journey is a testament to the value of education in our community. He answered the call to public service and began teaching in Philadelphia's public schools; and

Whereas, Furthering his resolve for public service, Dwight joined the Urban League and became a community activist, working tirelessly to stop blight and lower crime in his neighborhood. His efforts, driven by a deep-rooted love for his community, have left a lasting impact on the lives of his neighbors; and

Whereas, In a remarkable display of aspiration and inspiration, Dwight was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1980, at the young age of 26. He dedicated himself to urban renewal and worked tirelessly to ensure that the voices of the poor and underserved were heard. His efforts were focused on providing a high quality of life for working-class neighborhoods in Northwest; and

Whereas, Dwight's pioneering work led him to become the first African-American Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, an historic achievement. He served in this position for 20

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years and played a vital role in securing funding for various initiatives in Philadelphia, including those related to economic development, job training, education, and public transit; and

Whereas, Dwight's decades of service and transformative leadership led him to be elected to the United States House of Representatives in 2016, where he has been a champion for education reform, small and Black-owned businesses, and working families. He is recognized as an effective lawmaker, which has earned him membership on the influential Committee on Ways and Means; and

Whereas, One of his most significant investments has been in his neighborhood, West Oak Lane. He has worked tirelessly to transform the once-blighted Ogontz Avenue into a cultural and artistic gateway to the city's rich landscape. He spearheaded the creation of the Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation (OARC), which has developed Ogontz Avenue and West Oak Lane into a bustling economic engine for the city and a thriving Black middle-class community. Not only has his work led to the economic prosperity of the region, but it has also contributed to cultural enrichment with the creation of the West Oak Lane Jazz & Arts Festival, one of the largest festivals of its kind in the nation; and

Whereas, Dwight started his career as an educator, with a focus on inspiring and nurturing the next generation of leaders. He remained true to his calling by helping to establish the West Oak Lane Charter School, which is an outstanding example of a community-created public school that has educated countless children from kindergarten through eighth grade. Dwight has been a vital part of the West Oak Lane community, as well as the Northwest, the city, and the nation. He has devoted nearly five decades of his life to serving others. His contributions have touched the lives of millions and left a lasting legacy in our society. Many members of this body rely upon his wise counsel, compassion, mentorship, and example to guide their thoughts and deeds; now, therefore,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. The West Oak Lane Library is hereby renamed and dedicated as the

"Dwight Evans Library of West Oak Lane".

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately.