

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 170478)

RESOLUTION

Hereby recognizing May 18, 2017 as Haitian Flag Day in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Haiti became the only nation in the Western Hemisphere to defeat three European empires, and remains the only nation in the world established as the result of a successful revolutionary uprising of enslaved African people; and

WHEREAS, The Haitian Revolution was one of the most influential uprisings in the Western Hemisphere, sparking slave revolts throughout the Caribbean which forced the eventual end of slavery in the British and French Caribbean occupied territories. Additionally, it inspired the three major slave revolts in the United States; Gabrielle Prosser in 1800, Denmark Vesey in 1822, and Nat Turner in 1830; and

WHEREAS, The African heroes in “Hispaniola” fought for human rights, liberty, equality and fraternity, and went on to establish the first free black republic in the world, “the Republic of Haiti”; the first independent nation in Latin America and the first nation to renounce slavery; and

WHEREAS, After the capture of Toussaint L’Ouverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, his successor, modified the flag by stripping the white band from the French flag. Signifying that we are no longer under the white race domination, and inserting in the center the coat of arms with the words, “L’Union fait la force” meaning, “Through Unity, there is Strength”; and

WHEREAS, The Haitian flag is a symbol of pride, unity, individual liberty, and is tightly linked to the country’s history of struggle and freedom; it is a commemoration of the heroes of Haiti’s history with the red symbolizing the blood and the sacrifices made by the heroes of the Haitian Revolution, and the blue is emblematic of hope and unity; and

WHEREAS, Notably, it was Dessalines’ victory over Rochambeau in Vertieres that forced Napoleon to abandon his bid for the control of Louisiana and, eventually, the rest

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of the “New World”. Therefore, were it not for Dessalines and his troops of freed slaves of African origin, the United States of America would most likely not be what they are today. “The Louisiana Purchase” was a turning point in which historical importance has been ranked “next to the Declaration of Independence and the adoption of the constitution”; and

WHEREAS, Our beloved Haiti has given great gifts to black people all over the world; the gift of freedom, the gift of pride, and the gift to walk tall with their heads high. This bicolor flag is not only the Flag of Haiti but the flag of freedom, the flag of liberty, the flag of equality, the flag of fraternity around the world; and

WHEREAS, Haitians also fought for the American Independence at the siege of Savannah, Georgia, in 1779: The Chasseurs-Volontaires de Saint-Domingue, a regiment of soldiers who formed one-tenth of the allied army before Savannah in the fall of 1779. This unit was comprised of over 500 free men of color from the island of Haiti and was the largest unit of men of African descent to fight in the American Revolution; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL, Hereby declares May 18, 2017 as Haitian Flag Day in Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia to honor the Haitian Flag Day.

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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 eleventh of May, 2017.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Blackwell, Gym, Green, Domb, Squilla and Parker
Sponsored by: Councilmembers Blackwell, Gym, Green, Domb, Squilla, Parker, Oh, Bass, Greenlee, Jones, Council President Clarke, Councilmembers Johnson, Quiñones Sánchez, Reynolds Brown, Taubenberger and O'Neill