

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Declaring Johnson House Historic Site's annual Juneteenth Festival as the Philadelphia Juneteenth Festival and recognizing, honoring, and celebrating Juneteenth in Philadelphia as the day when enslaved African Americans were freed in the United States of America more than 150 years ago.

Sponsors: Councilmember Bass, Councilmember Gym, Councilmember Jones, Councilmember Green, Councilmember Blackwell, Councilmember Taubenberger

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Declaring Johnson House Historic Site’s annual Juneteenth Festival as the Philadelphia Juneteenth Festival and recognizing, honoring, and celebrating Juneteenth in Philadelphia as the day when enslaved African Americans were freed in the United States of America more than 150 years ago.

WHEREAS, On June 19, 1865, slaves in Galveston, Texas were informed that they were free, long after slaves were freed in all other states. Former slaves coined the phrase Juneteenth to celebrate their newfound freedom by combining the month of the occurrence (June) with the day (19th); and

WHEREAS, Located at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Washington Lane in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Johnson House stands as a site where the principles of the 1688 Germantown Protest Against Slavery were acted upon, and is designated as a National Historic Landmark; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has a rich history for its significant role in the Underground Railroad and the Abolitionist movement; the Johnson House was a “station” and meeting space for other abolitionists, including conductors Harriet Tubman and William Still; and

WHEREAS, Johnson House Historic Site is an historic house museum and a center for civil and social advocacy that represents what everyday people have done and can do to make a difference in their community and beyond by creating interactive educational opportunities, fostering community initiatives, and preserving the historic integrity of the house, grounds and outlier buildings; and

WHEREAS, Johnson House Historic Site, will celebrate Juneteenth, the oldest nationally-celebrated holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, by leading the organizing and planning for its 10th Annual Juneteenth Festival on Saturday, June 18, 2016; and

WHEREAS, The festival attendees enjoy shopping, the arts, food, access to educational information from

diverse vendors and the opportunity to attend a Black Colleges Matter Panel on the history of Historically Black Colleges and Universities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby declares Johnson House Historic Site's annual Juneteenth Festival as the Philadelphia Juneteenth Festival and recognizes, honors, and celebrates Juneteenth in Philadelphia as the day when enslaved African Americans were freed in the United States of America more than 150 years ago.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the board of Johnson House Historic Site for their leadership in hosting the annual Juneteenth Festival, and as further evidence of the sincere admiration of this legislative body.