

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Honoring the life and legacy of Cathy Brady, a fearless, pioneering labor leader, whose organizing work serves as a model for leadership, tenacity, and revolutionary spirit, in recognition of May Day in the City of Philadelphia.

Sponsors: Councilmember Gym, Councilmember Henon, Councilmember Blackwell, Councilmember Johnson

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4/25/2019	0	CITY COUNCIL			
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Honoring the life and legacy of Cathy Brady, a fearless, pioneering labor leader, whose organizing work serves as a model for leadership, tenacity, and revolutionary spirit, in recognition of May Day in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Cathy Brady was known to many as a “working-class hero.” She was an inspirational leader within the labor movement whose spirit and support deeply impacted so many she worked with and marched alongside; and

WHEREAS, Brady has been cherished as a figurehead in Philadelphia’s labor community for the past four decades. Described as “a union member through and through,” Brady first worked as a cleaner. Later, when poor working conditions sparked Eastern Airlines employees to strike in 1989, Brady, a baggage handler, served as a strike captain during a two-year saga that led to the liquidation of the entire company in 1991; and

WHEREAS, While working as a process operator at the BP oil refinery in Delaware County, Brady served as a leader on the picket line with the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, going above and beyond to help raise money for workers and their families during the nine-month lock out; and

WHEREAS, Brady spent most of her career with SEIU Healthcare, where she organized thousands of nursing home workers for two decades and helped grow the union to a force in the labor landscape. She eventually became the union’s Vice President, directing statewide efforts to support long-term care workers in their fight for fairer pay and working conditions; and

WHEREAS, Brady was actively involved in the Philadelphia Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) and the Philadelphia Area Project on Occupational Safety and Health. In 2017, CLUW named her Union Woman of the Year. She finished her career serving as a federal mediator, helping workers and employers reach mutually beneficial agreements in the midst of difficult negotiations; and

WHEREAS, Brady was actively committed to affirming Philadelphia’s commitment to organized labor-even in

our public spaces. She spearheaded an effort to create a monument dedicated to the labor movement, single-handedly raising \$300,000 from union and government sources to fund its construction. After a decade of fierce advocacy, the monument, “The Labor Monument: Philadelphia’s Tribute to the American Worker,” was unveiled in 2010 in Elmwood Park, previously home to thousands of shipyard workers, electrical workers, and steelworkers. The monument commemorates landmark events in the United States labor movement, such as the formation of the immigrant-led United Farm Workers in 1966. The first US monument honoring the labor movement, it also emphasizes the labor leadership of immigrants, women, and people of color.

WHEREAS, Cathy Brady is survived by her mother, Lucy; daughter, Machele; son, Tom; two grandchildren, seven siblings, and 26 nieces and nephews. Her legacy is a true example of how one person can, through a combination of fierceness and compassion, uplift workers and their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Does hereby honor the life and legacy of Cathy Brady, a fearless, pioneering labor leader, whose organizing work serves as a model for leadership, tenacity, and revolutionary spirit, in recognition of May Day in the City of Philadelphia.