

Legislation Text

File #: 200149, **Version:** 0

Recognizing and honoring Julie Coker for her dedication to the PHLCVB and Philadelphia and wishing her luck on her future endeavors.

WHEREAS, Julie Coker grew up in Wilmington, Delaware, and visited Philadelphia often throughout her childhood. She is a graduate of Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, where she received a B.S. in Hospitality Management. In 1989, Coker used her Magna Cum Laude degree to earn a position with the Hyatt organization; and

WHEREAS, Coker had a 21-year career with Hyatt, where she held various positions in Columbus, Chicago, and Philadelphia. During her time at the Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn's Landing, Coker served as general manager; and

WHEREAS, Coker became President and CEO of the PHLCVB in 2016, where she oversaw all the organization's departments and operational duties. She was the only African American woman to lead a major convention and visitors bureau in the top 50 U.S. cities. Highlights of her work include overseeing the PHLCVB's role in the 2016 Democratic National Convention and the 2017 NFL Draft. These two events generated a combined \$325 million in economic value for Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, the PHLCVB brought 1.3 million visitors and \$500 million in economic impact to the region via conventions and meetings under Coker's leadership. That same year, the region also set a record for overall visitation; and

WHEREAS, Coker serves on several boards, including the U.S. Travel Association and Destinations International. She served as co-chair for U.S. Travel's Meetings Mean Business Coalition and secretary-treasurer for International Association of Exhibitions and Events Executive Committee. In Philadelphia, Coker served as a board member of the Global Philadelphia Association and on the executive committee for the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. She also served on the Philadelphia International Airport Advisory Committee and the Mayor's Cultural Advisory Committee. From 2016 to 2019, Coker co-chaired the Mayor's Shared Spaces Initiative to combat homelessness, and in 2016, she served as the chair of Mayor Jim Kenney's transition team for the DNC; and

WHEREAS, Coker has received numerous awards throughout her career. In 2012 and 2019, the Philadelphia Business Journal named Coker among their Women of Distinction honorees. In 2017, she was the United Negro College Fund Mayor's Ball Honoree for Civic Leadership and was named one of the Network Journal's 25 Most Influential Black Women in Business. She has also received the Cradle of Liberty Good Scout Award by the Boy Scouts of America Cradle of Liberty Council and was the recipient of the 2011 John Wanamaker Award given by the YMCA of Philadelphia and Vicinity; and

WHEREAS, Coker said, "Serving as the president and CEO of the PHLCVB has been a highlight of my career." In March, Coker will leave the PHLCVB to become President and CEO of the San Diego Tourism Authority (SDTA); and

WHEREAS, Coker has made significant contributions during her tenure with the PHLCVB. PHLCVB Chairman Nick DeBenedictis said, “Julie has built a strong team, and the PHLCVB is well positioned for future success”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors Julie Coker for her hard work and dedication to the PHLCVB and Philadelphia and wishes her luck on her future endeavors as President and CEO of the SDTA.

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