Legislation Text

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Honoring and recognizing Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia, formerly the Jewish Hospital, on receiving a historical marker to commemorate its illustrious history.

WHEREAS, Following years of organizing and fundraising, the Jewish Hospital opened its doors to patients in 1866 in a 22-bed farmhouse in West Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, By way of background, Pennsylvania's Jewish population increased sharply with those who fled during the German Revolutionary Period from the 1830s to the 1870s. Pennsylvania's largest city at that time, Philadelphia, was second only to New York City in terms of Jewish population and German Jewish settlements in the United States; and

WHEREAS, As the City's Jewish population grew, the need to serve Jewish patients also grew. For example, many patients wanted a hospital where kosher food was served, where customs of the Jewish Sabbath and Jewish holidays were observed, and where Jewish burial rituals were followed; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphian Isaac Leeser wrote extensively in the Jewish press about the need to care for poor, sick, and elderly Jews. He became a part of the "Jewish Hospital Association," which was formed in 1865 to collect funding, designate staff, and build the hospital in West Philadelphia by 1866; and

WHEREAS, The Jewish Hospital in Philadelphia was the third to open in the United States, after one opened in Cincinnati in 1850 and New York City (Mount Sinai) in 1852; and

WHEREAS, The Jewish Hospital was among the first hospitals in the City to publicly proclaim that it was dedicated to the relief of the sick and wounded no matter the color of one's skin, the God they worshipped, or the neighborhood or nation from which they came. These words appeared over the entrance of the Jewish Hospital when it opened: "Dedicated to the relief of the sick and wounded without regard to creed, color or nationality"; and

WHEREAS, This credo was groundbreaking for the time, assuring Jewish Civil War veterans, freed slaves, women and children, rich and poor, that they could rely on the hospital for outstanding medical care delivered with compassion and without discrimination; and

WHEREAS, The hospital quickly outgrew the farmhouse and in 1872 moved to its current location in North Philadelphia. Over the next 50 years, several other Jewish hospitals would open in the City; and

WHEREAS, On February 5, 1952, Albert Einstein Medical Center was established through the merger of the Jewish Hospital (chartered in 1865), Mount Sinai Hospital (chartered in 1900), and Northern Liberties Hospital (chartered in 1922); and

WHEREAS, What started as the Jewish Hospital grew to become Einstein Healthcare Network, a leading healthcare system made up of Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia, Einstein Medical Center Elkins Park,

Einstein Medical Center Montgomery, multiple outpatient care centers and dozens of physician practices throughout Philadelphia and Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, Over more than a century and a half, Einstein has much to be proud of - breakthroughs in research, serving as a leader in medical education, training more than 3,500 health professional students each year, and for numerous innovations in patient care; and

WHEREAS, On October 11, 2017, a historical marker will be placed outside Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia to memorialize its prominent history; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors and recognizes Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia, formerly the Jewish Hospital, on receiving a historical marker to commemorate its illustrious history.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Einstein Healthcare Network as a sincere expression of the Philadelphia City Council's recognition.