

Legislation Text

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Declaring the Summer of 2023 the Summer of Hip Hop in Philadelphia, in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop and in recognition of the genre's contribution to musical culture.

WHEREAS, Hip hop is a cultural movement that originated in the South Bronx in New York City in 1973, and came from the multicultural exchange between African Americans and children of immigrants from countries in the Caribbean, most notably Jamaica. It has since grown to become a global phenomenon, influencing music, fashion, art, and social activism; and

WHEREAS, Early hip hop music developed as an outlet for the disenfranchised youth from marginalized backgrounds and low-income areas, and provided a voice for these young people as the hip hop culture reflected the social, economic, and political realities of their lives. Some of the people who helped establish hip hop culture included DJ Kool Herc, DJ Disco Wiz, Grandmaster Flash, and Afrika Bambaataa, who developed innovative techniques like breakbeats and scratching, using turntables and mixers to create unique sounds and rhythms; and

WHEREAS, Hip hop first took hold at block parties and incorporated DJs who began isolating the percussive breaks in popular soul and funk songs. MCs, also known as rappers, evolved from party hosts to performers who would deliver rhythmic and rhyming vocals over the beats provided by the DJs. Rapping became a prominent feature of hip hop, with artists like Grandmaster Caz, Melle Mel, and Kurtis Blow gaining popularity; and

WHEREAS, The late 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of hip hop recordings with the release of groundbreaking songs like Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight" in 1979. And these early, formative years also gave rise to influential Philadelphia-based hip hop artists. Lady B, one of the first female hip hop artists, released *To The Beat Y'all* in 1979, putting the city on the hip hop map. Just a few years later, in 1985, Philly rapper Schoolly D helped define gangsta rap with his influential single *P.S.K. (What Does It Mean?)*; and

WHEREAS, Through the late 1980s and 1990s, hip hop artists gained mainstream and commercial success, and Philly's hip hop scene flourished with big-name acts bringing attention to the city. DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince won the first-ever Grammy for best rap performance for their song *Parents Just Don't Understand*, in 1989. This era is often referred to as the "Golden Age" of hip hop, and artists like N.W.A, A Tribe Called Quest, De La Soul, Eric B. & Rakim, and Gang Starr pushed the boundaries of lyricism, storytelling, and social commentary in their music; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has played a crucial role in the development and evolution of hip hop, with a rich history of influential artists, DJs, and producers who have emerged from the city's vibrant music scene. The city has produced iconic hip hop artists and groups, such as The Roots, Eve, Beanie Sigel, and more. Philadelphia's legacy continues to thrive with a new generation of talented artists, including Meek Mill, Tierra Whack, the late PnB Rock, Lil Uzi Vert, and more, who have gained international recognition and adding their unique voices to the ever-evolving hip hop landscape; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's hip hop culture has had a profound impact on the city's identity, serving as a catalyst for social change, inspiring community engagement, and providing a platform for marginalized voices to be heard. Hip hop has played a pivotal role in empowering young people, providing outlets for self-expression, offering an alternative to negative influences, and has helped to foster creativity, leadership, and a sense of purpose among our city's youth; and

WHEREAS, Hip hop remains a dominant force in popular music and the year 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the birth of hip hop, a milestone that deserves recognition and celebration; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia will continue to recognize the importance of honoring and preserving the cultural heritage of hip hop, and promoting its continued growth and evolution; now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, honors the 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop and Declaring the Summer of 2023 the Summer of Hip Hop in Philadelphia.