

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 100805, **Version:** 0

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Honoring BEBASHI on its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

WHEREAS, In 1985 and in response to the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS in Philadelphia's African American community, Rashidah (Hassan) Abdul-Khabeer and Wesley Anderson, Jr. founded Blacks Educating Blacks About Sexual Health Issues or more commonly known as BEBASHI; and

WHEREAS, At the time of BEBASHI's founding, Philadelphia did not have any HIV/AIDS education programs or services targeting African Americans or other communities of color and understanding that behaviors contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS, STDs, and unplanned pregnancies, BEBASHI launched a major community outreach education and service effort to combat the sexual health concerns of communities of color; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, BEBASHI expanded its services by offering counseling and testing and case management services for people living with HIV and remains Philadelphia's largest community-based minority provider of HIV/AIDS education and services; and

WHEREAS, BEBASHI became a model for the provision of culturally specific education and services for other communities of color and was instrumental in the development of similar services to the Latino community through Congreso de Latinos Unidos and Asociacion de Puertorriquenos en Marcha (APM) and to the Asian community through the Korean Businessmen's Association and Intercultural Family Services Center; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, Gary J. Bell was hired as BEBASHI's Executive Director and, through his leadership, BEBASHI has enhanced existing initiatives and implemented several innovative programs including a women's initiative, breast cancer awareness drive, emergency food cupboard, weekly support groups, and one of the nation's only discharge planning program for HIV positive ex-offenders; and

WHEREAS, BEBASHI's mission is to provide culturally sensitive health related information, direct service, research, and technical assistance to the urban community and, through its mission, this organization has touched the lives of over 600,000 people through a continuum of HIV/AIDS prevention, advocacy, and direct services including street outreach, prevention education workshops, HIV - STD - Pregnancy counseling and testing, case management, early intervention, care outreach, support groups, and emergency food services; now therefore, be it,

**RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,** That we hereby honor BEBASHI on its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**FURTHER RESOLVED,** That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Gary J. Bell, BEBASHI's Executive Director, as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.