

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 240483, **Version:** 0

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Honoring the Life and Legacy of Doris “Jean” Hackney, “The Grandmother of North Philadelphia.”

WHEREAS, Doris “Jean” Gay Sanders Hackney was born in Philadelphia on Nov. 19, 1946, to Louvenia and Jasper Gay; and

WHEREAS, Her parents’ loving union produced Jasper, Jr., Samuel, Shirley, Mildred, and Kelly who all preceded her in death, and Mary Brown; and

WHEREAS, Jean graduated from Simon Gratz High School and spent her career as a facilities worker at the School District of Philadelphia and the Internal Revenue Service; and

WHEREAS, Jean would first marry Raifford Sanders, producing her first son Christopher Lee Sanders, Sr., who was born on October 12, 1970 and passed away on February 21, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Jean later married Thomas “Tom” Douglas Hackney, Sr. on May 27, 1995, who loved and cared for her until his passing on October 13, 2017, after which Hackney continued to be the caregiver for his mother Alice until her death in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Upon retirement, Jean would become steadily engaged as a community leader, especially on the issue of kinship care of children by grandparents; and

WHEREAS, Jean served as the Vice President of Grands as Parents, Inc., a North Central Philadelphia-based community organization that offered free weekly food distributions and holiday food drives, holiday toy distributions, book bag and coat drives, art therapy to youth and caregiver participants, presentations and training on civic engagement, financial literacy classes, seminars on custody and grandparents rights, and more; and

WHEREAS, Jean led the organization for several decades after founder Ernestine McCall and dedicated volunteer Shirley Chaney (“Sister”) passed away, and Eileen Brown stepped away from day-to-day management; and

WHEREAS, Through Grands as Parents Jean created dozens of programs to support those she cared most about like the Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Feed the Hungry Day of Service, Delta Sigma Theta Toy Library, and annual Civic Engagement Forums; and

WHEREAS, After decades of lobbying, Jean partnered with Community Ventures, Inc. and the City of Philadelphia to break ground on 37-unit Susquehanna Square affordable housing complex to support grandfamilies and other kinship providers in 2019; and

WHEREAS, Jean spoke about the need for improved resources for this population to governors, mayors, city council members, state representative, state senators and health care organizations, and her advocacy for

“grandfamilies” influenced policy and legislation championed by Senators Bob Casey and Susan Collins; and

WHEREAS, Jean loved to travel, and planned amazing trips for youth to Camelback and Rehoboth retreats for adult respite; and

WHEREAS, Jean cherished all the friendships in her life, organizing birthday parties for her Scorpio trio, taking friends and neighbors to fabulous brunches, and hosting an annual Memorial Day Block Party; and

WHEREAS, Jean was a huge booster for Reverend Taehoo Lee and his Uber Street Summer Camp; and

WHEREAS, Jean passed away on April 30, 2024 and is survived by her stepson Thomas Hackney, Jr., daughter in law Janaya Sanders (Christopher), granddaughter Jasmine Brogden, grandson Christopher Lee Sanders, Jr. (Kelsey), six great grandchildren Cy’asia, Jykyra, Jamira, Zierra, Jaycon, and Skye, her sister Mary Brown (Charles) and brother in law Craig Berry (Mildred); and

WHEREAS, Jean leaves to mourn her loss friend and caregiver Rodney Scott; her neighbors on Woodstock Street; Grands as Parents, Inc. coworkers and constituents, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, family, and friends; and

WHEREAS, Jean leaves behind a legacy of leadership on kinship care: now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby honors the life and legacy of Doris “Jean” Hackney, “The Grandmother of North Philadelphia,” for her dedication to and support of grandparents raising their grandchildren, and to the North Philadelphia community, during her twilight years in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Doris “Jean” Hackney as evidence of the true and sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.