

Legislation Text

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Honoring the Career of Elmer Smith.

WHEREAS, The Council of the City of Philadelphia is pleased and proud to honor Elmer Smith for his several years of civic and community engagement to the citizens and institutions of the greater Philadelphia region through his outstanding career in the field of journalism; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith is a product of the Philadelphia public school system and began his journalism career over 38 years ago when he decided to major in journalism at Temple University and, during his last semester, he was hired by the Evening Bulletin as a night time re-write man; and

WHEREAS, Elmer Smith's career at the Bulletin progressed and he became a City Hall reporter, covering many of the City's prominent figures and issues, including the court system, Abscam, Council Presidents George X. Schwartz and Joseph Coleman, then-District Attorney Ed Rendell and then-Councilman John Street, and Mayors Frank Rizzo, Bill Green, and Wilson Goode, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, In 1983, the Bulletin closed and Mr. Smith continued his journalism career at the Philadelphia Daily News as a sports writer and, later, his "Sports People" column focused on boxing and he had the opportunity to witness the golden era of this sport by covering Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Sugar Ray Leonard, Tommy Hearns, Michael Spinks, Larry Holmes, Roberto Duran, Evander Holyfield, and Iron Mike Tyson; and

WHEREAS, At the Daily News, Elmer Smith has been a columnist for approximately 22 years and he has traveled the world covering issues and events from boxing matches in Tokyo and Seoul, Russia and the fall of the Communist Party, Somalia and the famine of 1991, Haiti and the forced repatriation of refugees, and Nelson Mandela and the birth of a new South Africa; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his career, Mr. Smith has received numerous awards and accolades including the Nat Fleisher Award (highest award of the Boxing Writers Association of America), National Headliners Award (First place, Columnist category), WDAS radio's "Claim Your Culture" Award (first ever recipient), Sigma Delta Chi's journalist of the year award (multiple year winner), and American Red Cross Service Medal; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith is the author of *Out of My Mind: Humor and Humanity* and is a member of the William Monroe Trotter Group and he has used his career to mentor numerous people in life and professionals in journalism and is a founding member of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, an adjunct professor of journalism at Temple University, and a role model for his adopted class at Reynolds Elementary School and for students in the Philadelphia Futures Sponsor a Scholar Program; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith has been married for 33 years to the former Mary Ann Green and is the proud grandfather of two, and his oldest granddaughter, Ashley, has followed him into journalism and works at CBS3; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize and congratulate Mr. Elmer Smith for his several years of civic and community engagement to the citizens and institutions of the greater Philadelphia region through his outstanding career in the field of journalism.

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