

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring Reverend James Sterling Allen, Sr., D.D. of the historic Vine Memorial Baptist Church for serving and representing Philadelphia for 37 years on the occasion of his Retirement Celebration Weekend.

WHEREAS, After being honorably discharged from the United States Air Force after serving in the Korean Conflict in 1957, Reverend James Sterling Allen followed a calling he had received while in Korea to the preaching ministry. He practiced ministry in Little Rock, Arkansas; Omaha, Nebraska; and eventually came to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Allen has been a devoted husband to the late Dorothy Hunter Allen, a loving father to four children, and grandfather to five grandsons; and

WHEREAS, Allen was a student at Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock, Arkansas and played an integral role in fighting for employment and economic equality during the desegregation process that occurred during the Eisenhower Administration. He assisted the late Dr. Leon H. Sullivan in establishing the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) in Little Rock and rebuilding the OIC in Omaha. OICs are integral institutions that provide education, training, and support services regardless of race for those that are disadvantaged and have a background that makes finding a job and being self-sufficient difficult; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Allen was a student at the Interdenominational Theological Center during the time of Dr. Ralph Abernathy's installation to the West Hunter Street Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA. Rev. Allen participated in the installation where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered the Installation Sermon; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Allen has been a leader within the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. He was the fourth Vice President of the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education, and in 1994, Reverend Allen served as Chairman of the Election Commission. He has also served as the General Chair of the Host Committee of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc, multiple times; and

WHEREAS, During his pastorate in Philadelphia, Rev. Allen has served as Moderator of the Pennsylvania Eastern Keystone Baptist Association, President of the Baptist Ministries Conference of Philadelphia and Vicinity, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Baptist State Convention, and as the first President of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity; and

WHEREAS, Over the span of his years in Philadelphia, his good work has continued. He served in Philadelphia municipal government as Special Assistant to the Mayor during the administration of Mayor W. Wilson Goode. In 1994, Reverend Allen served as Chairman of the Election Commission for the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. More recently, he served as Chairman of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Allen has pastored five churches within the Baptist denomination. His longest and most prolific tenure has been at the historic Vine Memorial Baptist Church of Philadelphia, where he is known as "a man after God's own heart." His exemplary service towards Philadelphia is truly commendable; now, therefore,

be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize and honor Reverend James Sterling Allen, Sr., D.D. of the Historic Vine Memorial Baptist Church for serving and representing Philadelphia for 37 years on the occasion of his Retirement Celebration Weekend.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend James Sterling Allen of the Vine Memorial Baptist Church, evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.