

Legislation Text

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Honoring the African American Children's Book Project on the occasion of the 21st Annual African American Children's Book Fair.

WHEREAS, In 1926, noted historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the study of Negro life and history announced the second week of February to be "Negro History Week"; and

WHEREAS, The 2nd week in February was chosen because of the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass; and

WHEREAS, The first black history month celebration occurred at Kent State in February 1970 and in 1976, the federal government acknowledged the expansion of Black History Week to Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, During early American history, African Americans were not allowed to learn to read and have books; and

WHEREAS, The importance of book fairs cannot be understated and for twenty one years the African American Children's Book Fair has enhanced multi-culturalism in our City utilizing the joy of reading as a tool; and

WHEREAS, Vanesse Lloyd Sgambati created the book fair because she believes books open up a world of opportunities for children and after twenty one years is one of the oldest and largest single day events for children's literacy in the City of Philadelphia and throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, One of the most important reasons to encourage reading in our children is that studies show that the more our youth read the more likely they are to make positive lifestyle decisions as they grow older; and

WHEREAS, Strictly judging by attendance the fair is a tremendous success as well over 4,500 people attended the Fair in past years; and

WHEREAS, Rich or poor, no one leaves empty handed as the books themselves are priced at a level where they are more affordable and posters, bookmarkers, and raffle books are distributed free of charge to attendees; and

WHEREAS, One of the esteemed attendees will be Renée Watson who is the author of Harlem's Little Blackbird: The Story of Florence Mills, which was nominated for a 2013 NAACP Image Award and What Momma Left Me, which debuted as ABC's New Voice for 2010 in middle grade fiction; and

WHEREAS, One of Renée Watson's passions is using the arts to help youth cope with trauma and discuss social issues. Her first picture book, A Place Where Hurricanes Happen, was based on the poetry workshops she facilitated with young people in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and was featured on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams; and

WHEREAS, The fair is also lucky to host a terrific media partner, NBC 10 Philadelphia, represented by Kim Zachary and Monique Braxton who have been instrumental in keeping the literary flames ablaze for our children

in the City of Philadelphia through tireless contributions to the African American Children's Book Project; and

WHEREAS, The 21st Annual African American Book Fair will be held free of charge on Saturday February 9th from one to three pm at the gymnasium of the Community College of Philadelphia located at 17th & Spring Garden Streets; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor the African American Children's Book Project on the occasion of the 21st Annual African American Children's Book Fair.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to representatives of the African American Children's Book Project, Renée Watson, Kim Zachary and Monique Braxton for their hard work and efforts in the promotion of children's literacy, as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.