

Legislation Text

File #: 190725, **Version:** 0

Recognizing and honoring Assiah's Liver Fund for its extraordinary work in educating communities of color about organ donation and transplantation, as well spreading joy and awareness through children's books.

WHEREAS, Assiah's Liver Fund was established in 2009 by Rasheena Phinisee as a tribute to her daughter, Assiah Phinisee, who has endured several liver-related health complications; and

WHEREAS, In May of 2008, Assiah was diagnosed with drug induced hepatitis via breastmilk. By July of 2008, Assiah began experiencing debilitating effects of biliary atresia from her drug induced injuries which eventually led to liver failure; and

WHEREAS, By 2010, Assiah had already endured multiple surgeries - including a Kasai procedure and a failing liver transplant performed in 2012. On July 9, 2012, Assiah received her second transplant: a partial liver whose other lobe was transplanted to 1960's teen idol and fellow Philadelphian Robert Ridarelli-better known as Bobby Rydell; and

WHEREAS, Assiah, now 11, has overcome her health complications to share her story with the world in her children's book *I am a Flower Pot Made for a Plant* and coloring activity book *Transformer Kids Crew*, which aim to inform communities of color about organ donation, transplant, and careers within the medical industry; and

WHEREAS, Assiah's Liver Fund is a KYW News Radio award winning nonprofit that works to engage, educate and empower communities of color about organ donation and transplantation using a three-part approach; and

WHEREAS, The first part of Assiah's Liver Fund's approach is working with organizations within the faith based, healthcare, mental health, educational and nonprofit industries to produce resources that educate, engage and empower communities of color about organ donation and organ transplantation; and

WHEREAS, The second step is engaging families affected by pediatric organ failure by providing them with resources, support and materials that explain the transplantation process to their child; and

WHEREAS, Lastly, Assiah's Liver Fund educates individuals of color who are greatly impacted by organ failure and the process of organ donation; and

WHEREAS, This three-part approach helps Assiah's Liver Fund to achieve their goals, which are to create a more informed community, to increase the number of organs donated by people of color and to decrease the number of people in communities of color effected by organ failure, in addition to increasing the number of medical professionals of color in the transplant industry; and

WHEREAS, Assiah's Liver Fund also uses 4 main tools to engage, educate, and empower: (1) curriculum based education with their children's reading and activity books, (2) products that promote a healthy donor lifestyle, such as their lemonade stands, (3) creative & performing arts, through a puppet production of the organization's books, and (4) mental health workshops in schools to assist children affected by organ failure

and transplantation; and

WHEREAS, Assiah's Liver Fund has been featured on ABC, CBS, FOX, iHeart Radio, and on the cover of the Philadelphia Daily News. The organization has also worked in conjunction with other organizations, including Community Tissue Services, an Ohio based tissue recovery program, Gift of Life Donor Program, and Indiana Donor Network; and

WHEREAS, Assiah's courage and tenacity on her journey is inspiring, and the dedicated work of Assiah's Liver Fund should be recognized; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors Assiah's Liver Fund for its extraordinary work in educating communities of color about organ donation and transplantation, as well spreading joy and awareness through children's books.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Rasheena Phinisee and Assiah Phinisee as evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.