

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring the contributions of W.E.B. DuBois to higher education, preserving African American history, and his study of African American life; and further proclaiming the last Monday of February of each year as “W.E.B. DuBois Day” in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, William Edward Burghardt DuBois, better known as W.E.B. DuBois, was born on February 23, 1868 in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. DuBois later relocated to Philadelphia, near the area of 6th and South Street, where a historical marker now stands; and

WHEREAS, While in Philadelphia, he published his landmark study - the first case study of an African-American community - *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*, marking the beginning of his expansive writing career. In the study, he coined the phrase "the Talented Tenth," a term that describes the likelihood of one in 10 Black men becoming leaders of their race; and

WHEREAS, An original edition of *The Philadelphia Negro*, and other official documents and writings of Dubois, are archived at the Blockson Collection at Temple University in Philadelphia. A mural in Dubois' honor is painted on the wall of Engine Company No. 11 along South Street; and

WHEREAS, In 1885, Dubois moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend Fisk University and completed his master's degree. DuBois was then selected for a study-abroad program at the University of Berlin. While a pupil in Germany, he studied with some of the most prominent social scientists of his day and was exposed to political perspectives; and

WHEREAS, In 1895, W.E.B. DuBois became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard; and

WHEREAS, In 1903, DuBois published his seminal work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, a collection of literature that DuBois wrote extensively, and was the best-known spokesperson for African-American rights during the first half of the 20th Century; and

WHEREAS, In 1909, DuBois co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and served as editor of its monthly magazine, *The Crisis*. DuBois also helped organize several Pan-African Congresses to free African colonies from European powers; and

WHEREAS, W.E.B. DuBois died on August 27, 1963 - one day before Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington - at the age of 95, in Accra, Ghana, while working on an encyclopedia of the African Diaspora; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, the 400 Youth Leadership Team of I.C.A.R.E. Academy created the annual “W.E.B. DuBois Day” event to educate the City of Philadelphia and other youth on W.E.B. DuBois, his philosophy and social study of *The Philadelphia Negro*, and to recognize the evolution of the Philadelphia Negro, while acknowledging those whose leadership supports the advancement of positive human life through education; now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors the contributions of W.E.B. DuBois to higher education, preserving African American history, and his study of African American life; and further proclaiming the last Monday of February of each year as “W.E.B. DuBois Day” in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an engrossed copy of this resolution be presented in the memory of W.E.B. DuBois as evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.