

Legislation Text

File #: 181024, **Version:** 0

Recognizing and honoring State Senator Stewart Greenleaf on the occasion of his retirement and thanking him for his commitment to Criminal Justice Reform.

WHEREAS, After an illustrious 40 years representing Pennsylvania's 12th District, State Senator Stewart Greenleaf is retiring at the end of this year. He began his service in the State House of Representatives in 1977 and the State Senate in 1979; and

WHEREAS, No member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly has been the prime sponsor of as many bills signed into law as Senator Greenleaf. Since 1977, he has been the prime sponsor of more than 160 bills (an average of 4 per year) that have been signed into state law by 7 governors. He has also been influential in the passage of an additional 155 pieces of legislation that became law for which he was not the prime sponsor; and

WHEREAS, A former Montgomery County Assistant District Attorney, Senator Greenleaf has chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee since 1985. His efforts have reduced recidivism and helped returning defendants to be productive citizens; and

WHEREAS, Senator Greenleaf has built a sterling reputation as a pragmatic, independent-thinking legislator who is willing to cross the aisle to work for the common good. In announcing his retirement, he said, "My mantra has always been that there is no Republican or Democrat idea, that ideas shouldn't be pigeon holed as liberal or conservative. Ideas that are good for our community deserve to be supported"; and

WHEREAS, Among Senator Greenleaf's most notable legislative contributions are a constitutional amendment adopted in 1996 which allows child witnesses to testify via closed-circuit television and "Megan's Law", which protects children from sexual predators; and

WHEREAS, Towards the end of his final term, Senator Greenleaf shepherded three bills he sponsored through the legislature to become law. The Safe Harbor Bill (Senate Bill 554) prevents child victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation from being criminally prosecuted for crimes they have been forced or coerced to commit. Senate Bill 915 extends the time period for the filing of a post-conviction relief petition under Pennsylvania's Post-Conviction Relief Act from 60 days to one year when new evidence is discovered. Senate Bill 916 allows expanded post-conviction DNA testing to prove innocence when new technology would yield more accurate and probative results than technology available at the time of trial. All three bills were signed into law on October 24, 2018; and

WHEREAS, The citizens of Philadelphia, and all Pennsylvanians, have benefited from the tireless efforts of Senator Stewart Greenleaf to improve the criminal justice system over the past four decades. From protecting children and victims to preventing unjust punishment from being executed, Senator Greenleaf deserves enormous gratitude from all citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors State Senator Stewart Greenleaf on the occasion of his retirement and thanks him for his commitment to

criminal justice reform.

FUTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to State Senator Stewart Greenleaf.