

Legislation Text

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Honoring the 50th Anniversary of Rev. Thomas J. Ritter's Pastoral Leadership of Second Macedonia Baptist Church.

WHEREAS, The Council of the City of Philadelphia is pleased and proud to honor Rev. Thomas J. Ritter on the 50th Anniversary of his pastoral leadership of Second Macedonia Baptist Church ("Second Macedonia") and for his several years of civic and community service to the citizens and institutions of the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Thomas J. Ritter was born in 1922 in Allendale, South Carolina and later his family settled in York, Pennsylvania and in 1942, Rev. Ritter came to Philadelphia and he enrolled in Temple University and later at Eastern Baptist College where he received his theological education; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Ritter had served as the associate pastor of Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church ("Enon") and at the request of Enon's senior pastor, the late Rev. William B. Toland, Rev. Ritter came to Second Macedonia; and

WHEREAS, When Rev. Ritter came to Second Macedonia it was located at American and Dauphin Streets and had only six members and now after 50 years and four moves, Second Macedonia has a substantial membership and is located at 1301 West Ruscomb Street, where they recently renovated the church sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, In the 1950s, Rev. Ritter met and worked with the late Rev. Leon H. Sullivan of Zion Baptist Church and together they operated the North Philadelphia Youth Employment Service Center, which located jobs for underemployed youth. As a result of this work, they established the Opportunities Industrialization Center ("OIC") in which Rev. Ritter was an OIC co-founder and its first executive director; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Ritter is one of the most influential and well-respected members of the clergy in the Greater Philadelphia community. In this regard, he served on numerous boards and commissions including but not limited to the Philadelphia National Bank (now Wachovia), the Eastern Theological Seminary (now Palmer Seminary), the Philadelphia Human Relations Commission, and the Philadelphia Gas Works; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize and congratulate Rev. Ritter on his 50 years of pastoral leadership of Second Macedonia Baptist Church and for his several years of civic and community service to the citizens and institutions of the City of Philadelphia; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Rev. Ritter as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.