



# City of Philadelphia

City Council  
Chief Clerk's Office  
402 City Hall  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

## Legislation Text

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Honoring Philadelphia's Non-Profit Women Leaders in recognition of Women's History Month.

WHEREAS, Non-profits are an economic engine for Philadelphia's local and regional economy; and

WHEREAS, Non-profits' vast economic contributions are evident in the United States' GDP. According to The Independent Sector, non-profits account for 5.5% of the GDP - the equivalent of \$805 billion. The impact of non-profit organizations is indisputably far-reaching and vital to the United States' economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, Judge Renee Cardwell Hughes currently serves as CEO of the American Red Cross of Southeastern PA. Prior to becoming the CEO, Judge Hughes served as a trial judge in the Court of Common Pleas, the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania which encompasses the City of Philadelphia, as well as the Trial Division of the court, since her appointment to the bench in 1995 by Governor Tom Ridge. She was elected to a full ten-year term beginning January 1996 and was re-elected in 2005 to a second full term. She specialized in homicides, but has handled both civil and criminal proceedings; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Donna Gentile O'Donnell has led a diverse and successful career in health care, life sciences and public service concentrated in the Greater Philadelphia area. Dr. O'Donnell is special assistant to the president and vice president for innovation partnerships and programs at Thomas Jefferson University. Formerly a principal with O'Donnell Associates, her clients included nonprofit organizations, universities and life science companies, including Cephalon. She was previously the managing director of the Eastern Technology Council for nine years. There, she played a significant role in developing and creating BioAdvance, a state entity designed to grow the life sciences industry in southeastern Pennsylvania, as well as many other key life science initiatives. She is a special limited partner in PA Early Stage Partners. She also holds a seat on the board of The Big House Foundation, which owns and operates the Allman Brothers Band Museum at The Big House in Macon, Ga; and

WHEREAS, Sharmain Matlock Turner is the President and CEO of the Urban Affairs Coalition. Having been at the helm of UAC since March of 1999, Matlock Turner has been a tireless advocate for families and communities across the Greater Philadelphia region. In addition to her community development and economic justice work, Matlock-Turner is committed to improving the lives of Philadelphia's children. Nearly twenty years ago, she founded West Oak Lane Charter School. Though she specializes in these separate but intersecting fields, Matlock-Turner continues to serve her community by sitting on the boards of various non-profits and other institutions; and

WHEREAS, Ellen Somekawa joined Asian Americans Unite <<http://aaunited.org/>>d (AAU) in 1988. In 1996, she became the executive director of AAU. Now, after nearly 20 years as executive director of Asian Americans United, one of Philadelphia's most dynamic advocacy groups, she became the head of FACTS Charter School. Somekawa has made Asian Americans United a dominant voice of the Asian community on most every topic of public importance, leading movements against gambling casinos, creating youth leadership programs, and transforming the annual Mid-Autumn Festival into a premiere cultural event that draws 5,000 people to Chinatown; and

WHEREAS, Catzie Vilayphonh is the Creative Director of *Laos in the House*, Catzie is also an award-winning spoken word poet and writer. As 1/2 of the group Yellow Rage, she became one of the first Asian American females to appear on HBO's Def Poetry Jam. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y22ty-VPpbA>> Now Vilayphonh, has thrown herself into *Laos in the House*, her multimedia project to spotlight a Southeast Asian community with a lower profile than the better-known refugees of Vietnam and Cambodia; and

WHEREAS, Maxine C. Harvey is the President of the Philadelphia Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. Since its founding in 1913, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority has clearly distinguished itself as a public service organization that boldly confronts the challenges of African Americans and hence, all Americans. The chapter's commitment to the sorority's Five-Point Programmatic Thrust continues to be focused on addressing the needs of the underserved; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Lorina Marshall-Blake is the President of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated's Omega Omega Chapter in Philadelphia. She is Vice President of Community Affairs for Independence Blue Cross and also President of the Independence Blue Cross Foundation. Her responsibility is to ensure that decision makers, at the highest levels, have a clear understanding of Blue Cross's goals and objectives and its commitment to subscribers, impacting over 3 million subscribers and the multi-billion health insurance industry as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Villines is the President of the Philadelphia Graduate Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Beta Delta Zeta Chapter. Beta Delta Zeta chapter is the first graduate chapter of Zeta in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the home chapter of Zeta Founder Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemmons. Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. was founded January 16, 1920, at Howard University, Washington, D.C. Since its inception, the organization has been innovative in that it has chronicled a number of firsts. It was the first National Pan-Hellenic Council organization to centralize its operations in a national headquarters, first to charter a chapter in Africa, first to form auxiliary groups, and first to be constitutionally bound to a fraternity, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. Zeta Phi Beta has chartered hundreds of chapters worldwide and has a membership of 120,000; and

WHEREAS, Lynette Moragne is the President of the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Alpha Eta Sigma Chapter. The idealism of the sorority is "Greater Service will lead to Greater Progress." The aim of Sigma Gamma Rho is to enhance the quality of life within the community. Public service, leadership development, and the education of youth are the hallmarks of the organization's programs and activities. Sigma Gamma Rho addresses concerns that impact society educationally, civically, and economically; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Bonnie Camarda has served as the Director of Partnerships for The Salvation Army of Greater Philadelphia since 1999. Born in Havana, Cuba but having made Philadelphia her home, Reverend Camarda has been an instrumental leader in the interfaith movement in the region. Outside of her own personal ministry, Reverend Carmada leads various efforts around the city against violence and organizes workshops around HIV/AIDS prevention. She is a passionate advocate and believes opportunity should be accessible to everyone; and

WHEREAS, Evelyn Marcha-Hidalgo, CEO/Executive Director of Intercultural Family Services, Inc. (Intercultural), began her work with the agency in 1981. Since that time, and under Mrs. Marcha-Hidalgo's leadership, Intercultural has evolved into a family-focused, multicultural, and multipurpose agency that provides a variety of public health and human services to first-generation Americans and life-long Philadelphians alike. Mrs. Marcha-Hidalgo's areas of expertise include financial management, program

development and design, and cultural competency training. She is an accountant and has a Masters degree in Organizational Dynamics from the University of Pennsylvania. She also completed the Executive Management Training Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Mrs. Marcha-Hidalgo serves on several local boards and committees. She considers her greatest accomplishment to be building an agency that embodies its motto of *Diversity in Action*®; and

WHEREAS, Laura Wentz is the President of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). The Coalition of Labor Union Women is America's only national organization for union women. Formed in 1974, CLUW is a nonpartisan organization within the union movement. The primary mission of CLUW is to unify all union women in a viable organization to determine our common problems and concerns and to develop action programs within the framework of our unions to deal effectively with our objectives; and

WHEREAS, Jeannine L. Lisitski has been the Executive Director of Women Against Abuse, Inc. since 2009. Women Against Abuse is the leading domestic violence advocate and service provider in Philadelphia and the largest in Pennsylvania. Women Against Abuse has a two-pronged mission of providing life-saving services to people experiencing domestic violence while leading the struggle to end domestic violence. Ms. Lisitski has worked for more than 22 years in the public benefit sector, focusing on issues of poverty, violence and homelessness. Ms. Lisitski holds a Master's Degree in Psychology and a Ph.D (ABD), in Social Work and Social Research. In addition, Ms. Lisitski holds a certificate in Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management from Harvard Business School as well as one in Non-Profit Executive Leadership from Bryn Mawr College, where she co-facilitated their Non-Profit Executive Leadership Institute for two years; and

WHEREAS, Amy Hennessey serves as Executive Director of Subcontractors Association of Delaware Valley (SADV). SADV is a membership association representing various trade subcontractors, suppliers, vendors, manufacturers, engineers, architects, and building owners in the commercial, industrial, institutional and healthcare construction industry. SADV is committed to improving the professionalism and competitiveness of its member companies through educational programs and industry liaisons, while providing opportunities for networking and leadership; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Debbie Carrera serves as the Principal of Kensington CAPA High School in North Philadelphia where she has transitioned the school into a \$43 million dollar state of the art building with the highest environmental certification in the state (LEED Platinum) and is working to create a culture and climate of academic excellence for all of her students and staff. She is actively involved in the community and serves as a Pastor at the Urban Worship Center. Her commitment to children has expanded over the years to include work in La Ceiba, Honduras where she has led three mission trips to help impoverished children; and

WHEREAS, Terri Matthews founded a charitable resource called Jaden's Voice, Inc. where she has held the position of CEO since inception. To date, Ms. Matthews has personally injected her own resources to establish Jaden's Voice and to provide services and equipment to families in need. Her enthusiasm for autism advocacy led to her election as the President of Early Intervention Services for the State of Pennsylvania, now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby honor Philadelphia's Non-Profit Women Leaders in recognition of Women's History Month.