

Legislation Text

File #: 240317, **Version:** 0

Honoring and congratulating Sapphira Cristál, “Philly’s Crown Jewel,” for her outstanding representation of Philadelphia’s unique queer performance art and drag scene culture on MTV’s *RuPaul’s Drag Race*.

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál is a classically trained opera singer, composer, and drag queen with a six-octave vocal range. Sapphira Cristál was born in Houston, Texas; began performing in drag while studying music at a conservatory in Rochester in 2009; and has called Philadelphia home since 2014; and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál holds 14 drag pageant crowns, including Miss’d America 2020/2021, and has performed nationwide. In 2014, she won the title of Miss Everything upon moving to Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál is a member of the drag queen girl group Philly’s Foxes, together with fellow drag queens Maria Topcatt, Iris Spectre, Omyra Lynn, Poison, Mary D’Knight, and Zsa Zsa St. James (with show DJ Chris Urban); and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál has appeared twice at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival: first in 2019, when she sang on the same bill as Stephanie Blythe, and again in 2023, when she was featured as a headlining artist; and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál is representing Philadelphia on the globally televised show *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, an MTV show in which drag queens compete to win the crown and title of America’s Next Drag Superstar. After applying to be a contestant on the show eleven times, Sapphira was cast on season 16 of the show, which premiered on MTV on January 5, 2024, and is airing through the spring; and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál became an early strong competitor on her season, winning the mini challenge, maxi challenge, and the lip sync all in the first episode; and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál carries on Philadelphia’s strong legacy as a Black opera performer, making this tradition her own by incorporating her signature “stunt queen” elements of drag into her live operatic performances, like sliding slowly into the splits while singing; and

WHEREAS, Sapphira Cristál works throughout the City and nationwide to inspire young people through appearances at colleges, youth camps, and high schools. She taught several years of master classes in drag makeup and performance at Emerson College, and she has given artist talks at Rockland Community College. An experienced attitude and stage presence coach, Sapphira has also taught master classes at the Philadelphia Burlesque Academy and various dance studios; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia City Council recognizes the deep and valuable experience of providing queer art, space, and community in the City of Philadelphia and honors Sapphira Cristál for showcasing our City as a space that welcomes queer artists of color; and

WHEREAS, Watching Sapphira Cristál’s success will inspire a new generation of our City’s queer youth of color to seek out queer spaces, arts, and other community activities; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia City Council declares Sapphira Cristál “a walking, talking, moving miracle” and “Philly’s Crown Jewel”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors and congratulates Sapphira Cristál, “Philly’s Crown Jewel”, for her outstanding representation of Philadelphia’s unique queer performance art and drag scene culture on MTV’s *RuPaul’s Drag Race*.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Sapphira Cristál as evidence of the admiration and respect of this body.