

Legislation Text

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The Philadelphia City Council is pleased and proud to hereby recognize and honor Navy Captain and National Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronaut Christopher Ferguson, Mission Commander of the space shuttle Endeavour during its 15-day flight to rebuild the International Space Station.

WHEREAS, Navy Captain Christopher Ferguson is a native of Northeast Philadelphia, a graduate of St. Martha's Grade School, Archbishop Ryan High School, and Drexel University, where he majored in Mechanical Engineering; and

WHEREAS, Captain Ferguson was commissioned from the Navy ROTC program at the University of Pennsylvania. He received his Navy Wings in Kingsville, Texas, in 1996 and was ordered to the F-14 Tomcat training squadron in Virginia Beach, Virginia. After a brief period of instruction, he joined the 'Red Rippers' of VF-11 deploying to the North Atlantic, Mediterranean and Indian Ocean on board the USS Forrestal (CV-59). While with VF-11 he also attended the Navy Fighter Weapon School (TOPGUN). He was selected for the Naval Postgraduate/Test Pilot School program in 1989 and graduated in 1992. Through June 1994 he was assigned to the Weapons Branch of the Strike Aircraft Test Directorate at the Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, where he served as the project officer for the F-14D weapon separation program, becoming the first pilot to release several types of air-to-ground weapons from the Tomcat. He served one year as an instructor at the Naval Test Pilot School before joining the 'Checkmates' of VF-211 in 1995 and completing a deployment to the Western Pacific/Persian Gulf in defense of the Iraqi no-fly zone on board the USS Nimitz (CVN-68). He briefly served as an F-14 logistics officer for the Atlantic Fleet prior to his selection to the space program; and

WHEREAS, Captain Ferguson reported to the Johnson Space Center in August 1998. Following the completion of two years of training and evaluation, he was initially assigned technical duties in the Astronaut Office Spacecraft Systems Branch involving the Shuttle Main Engine, External Tank, Solid Rocket Boosters and Software. He next served as spacecraft communicator (CAPCOM) and was the Lead CAPCOM for STS-118 in August 2007. He served as Pilot on STS-115 Atlantis (September 9-21, 2006) which successfully restarted assembly of the International Space Station. During the 12-day mission the crew delivered and installed the massive P3/P4 truss segment and two sets of solar arrays providing one quarter of the station's power. The crew also performed over 30 hours of robotic work using the Shuttle's robotic arm, as well as three spacewalks to complete the truss installation.

WHEREAS, On his STS-126 Endeavour mission, Captain Ferguson and his crew carried a reusable logistics module that holds supplies and equipment essential to sustain a crew of six on the International Space Station, including additional crew quarters, a regenerative life support system, and a Resistive Exercise Device (RED)-all of which will promote knowledge of outerspace that will enable us to further explore the Moon, Mars, and the universe beyond; and

WHEREAS, Captain Ferguson is the recipient of the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Strike/Flight Air Medal, three Navy Commendation Medals, the Navy Achievement Medal, and various other service awards/citations; and

WHEREAS, Captain Ferguson's message to our youth is to stay in school; that science and math are cool; and

that the challenges of energy production, pollution, global warming, etc., require a new generation of young men and women who are passionate about science and who want to understand these challenges and solve them for the world good; and

WHEREAS, Captain Ferguson is an extraordinary person whom we have come to regard with great admiration and affection, and who we claim as one of our own “Great Philadelphians.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That Philadelphia City Council is pleased and proud to hereby recognize and honor Navy Captain and National Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronaut Christopher Ferguson, Mission Commander of the space shuttle Endeavour during its 15-day flight to rebuild the International Space Station.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Captain and National Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronaut Christopher Ferguson, further evidencing the sincere admiration and gratitude of this legislative body.