

Legislation Text

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Also naming Broad Street from Spruce Street to Pine Street as "Gamble and Huff Walk."

WHEREAS, This year marks the 49th Anniversary of the extraordinary partnership of musical legends, Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff. As you may be intimately aware, they together founded PIR, which became the second largest African-American owned record label in America during the 1970's. PIR made its unforgettable mark internationally, creating an entire movement that is still known as "The Sound of Philadelphia"; and

WHEREAS, The Gamble-Huff collaborative chemistry generated a series of massive hits throughout the 1960s, including "I'm Gonna Make You Love Me" (a regional hit for Dee Dee Warwick later covered by Diana Ross & the Supremes and the Temptations), the Soul Survivors' "Expressway To Your Heart," the team's first Top 5 record, and the Intruder's 1968 breakout "Cowboys To Girls," blueprints for the emerging trademark sound of Philly Soul; and

WHEREAS, In 1971, Gamble and Huff founded PIR as the outlet for their creative vision. Building a stable of Philly-based talent -- including Patti LaBelle, Archie Bell & the Drells, Jerry Butler, the Ebonys, the Intruders, the O'Jays, Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, Billy Paul, MFSB, the Three Degrees, Teddy Pendergrass, Lou Rawls, just to name a few -- PIR recordings reached the tops of the charts from day one, at one point selling more than 10 million records in a nine month period, with hits like Billy Paul's "Me & Mrs. Jones," a Grammy-winning #1 pop and R&B smash, Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes' "If You Don't Know Me By Now," and the O'Jay's "Backstabbers" and "Love Train"; and

WHEREAS, By 1973, PIR was second only to Motown as the largest African-American owned company in America and became the birthplace, incubator and launching pad for the Philly Soul sound, a unique blend of R&B rhythms, sweet soul vocals, deep funk grooves, pulsing horn charts and lush string arrangements with melodic structures combining elements of pop, jazz and world music. This includes songs re-recorded by Rock 'N Roll legends such as Elvis Presley with the Jerry Butler hit "Only the Strong Survive" and the Rolling Stones re-recording the O'Jays hit song "Love Train." PIR also created sophisticated sound lovingly crafted in the studio by some of the 20th century's most influential producers and production teams -- including Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff, Thom Bell, Linda Creed, Gene McFadden and John Whitehead, Bunny Sigler, Dexter Wansel, Joe Tarsia and others -- Philly Soul set the stage for disco, smooth jazz, adult contemporary music and more. As a result the Gamble-Huff/PIR "music machine was responsible for generating over 100 Gold and Platinum records, producing and writing over 3,000 songs and charting over 70 number one hits"; and

WHEREAS, Having been covered or sampled by a vast array of artists including Jay-Z, Babyface, Nelly, OutKast, Angie Stone, Simply Red (whose 1989 version of "If You Don't Know Me By Now" was a #1 record earning Gamble and Huff the Best R&B Song Grammy), Bette Midler, Mary J. Blige, Michael Bublé, Kanye West, 50 Cent and T.I., among many others, Gamble and Huff songs and productions have entered the musical DNA of contemporary culture. It has been reported that one of Gamble and Huff's songs is played on the radio somewhere in the world every 13.5 minutes; and

WHEREAS, One of the most sought-after and heavily licensed catalogs of music in the world, the sounds of Gamble and Huff have figured prominently in television programs, films and advertising spots for more than 30

years. MFSB's #1 hit from 1974, "TSOP (The Sound of Philadelphia)," is best-known as the theme song for "Soul Train" while the O'Jays' funk/soul classic "For The Love Of Money," first released in 1973, enjoyed a massive resurgence as the theme song for Donald Trump's reality show, "The Apprentice" in 2004. Gamble-Huff songs may be heard in the soundtracks for a host of recent Hollywood films including the Bernie Mac-Ashton Kutcher- romantic comedy "Guess Who" (2005) and Eddie Murphy's 1996 hit "The Nutty Professor." Gamble-Huff songs have been used in high-profile television ad campaigns for Verizon, Old Navy, the Gap and Coors Beer, among many others; and

WHEREAS, More recently, Kenneth Gamble produced a single called "I Am An American" featuring Patti Labelle and the Temple University Orchestra and Choirs. The song has gained great recognition throughout the country for the powerful message it delivers to all Americans. The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia has featured the single in its renowned exhibition of African American history called America, I Am. Furthermore, the National Patriotism Museum honored Kenneth Gamble and Patti Labelle with the Patriotism Award on April 2, 2009. Gamble and Huff's musical genius and brilliant collaboration have earned the team a host of accolades. Last year, Gamble & Huff were inducted into the 2008 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame under the newly named Ahmet Ertegun Award. The Grammy winners have received the Recording Academy's Trustees and Lifetime Achievement Awards and were inducted into each of the Songwriters, R&B and Dance Music Halls of Fame. The music of Gamble & Huff continues to have a powerful influence on artists and fans around the world with unmatched instrumentation and lyrics. With countless classics and international acclaim, incredible influence and a continuing legacy, Gamble and Huff's mark on the world of music is undeniable; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Broad Street between Spruce and Pine Streets is also named Gamble and Huff Walk in honor of Mr. Kenneth Gamble and Mr. Leon Huff.