

Legislation Text

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Congratulating and honoring Frederick L. Voigt for 50 years of dedicated service to the residents of Philadelphia on the occasion of his retirement from the Office of the Philadelphia City Commissioners.

WHEREAS, Frederick L. Voigt has faithfully served the residents of Philadelphia with proud distinction since 1969, first as an Assistant City Solicitor, and later as an Assistant District Attorney under Arlen Specter. He then worked as a staff attorney for the Environmental Protection Agency, litigating some of the first asbestos cases in the United States; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, Fred became Executive Director of the Committee of Seventy, Philadelphia's independent civic watchdog organization established in 1904. Fred was considered one of the foremost experts on elections in Pennsylvania and consulted on election law throughout the United States. He served as both an advisor to, and a critic of, five mayoral administrations of Philadelphia government over his three decades there. Under his leadership, Seventy launched studies into the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, ports, housing, economic development, municipal utilities, personnel practices, transportation and police; and a judicial selection study that culminated in the creation of Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts. He also mentored and inspired hundreds of young people who went on to careers and significant volunteer work in public service; and

WHEREAS, In 2008, Fred joined the Office of the Philadelphia City Commissioners, lending his legal prowess and knowledge of election law to assist in transforming the electoral process in Philadelphia, including the selection of new voting systems and the assurance of checks and balances to protect the rights of voters and candidates to fair and free elections; and

WHEREAS, Fred was raised in Longport, New Jersey as the second of four sons to Jacob and Mary Voigt. His father was an executive with the Pennsylvania Railroad who commuted daily to Philadelphia. Fred graduated from Valley Forge Military Academy and the University of Denver. He attended Dickinson Law School, where he met his wife, Patricia Van Allen Voigt. They were married the year he began his service to Philadelphia, and will celebrate their 50th Anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, As a resident of Chestnut Hill, Fred has served as a devoted member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church for nearly 50 years, and raised two daughters, Carey (Learnard) and Sarah (Savage), and his three grandchildren, Mac, Anna Lee, and Wyatt, have become his greatest joy, apart from his orchids. Fred has been awarded the highest honors at the Philadelphia Flower Show for his orchids, including special distinction for winning 26 ribbons in the 2019 Flower Show, and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Orchid Award; and

WHEREAS, Those who know him recognize that, aside from the Flower Show, Fred doesn't care for accolades. His preference is to be known for his relationships with us - those to whom he has given friendship, advice, knowledge, guidance, generosity, and love. Fred considers the people who have worked alongside him for the betterment of Philadelphia as his extended family. There is no love greater than his for the City of Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby congratulates and

honors Frederick L. Voigt on the occasion of his retirement from the Office of the Philadelphia City Commissioners and wishes him well in his future endeavors.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Fred Voigt as further evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.