

Legislation Text

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Congratulating the International Association of Blacks in Dance on hosting their 32nd Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance.

WHEREAS, The International Association of Blacks in Dance (“IABD”) is an association that serves to preserve and promote dance by people of African ancestry or origin. The organization was founded in 1991 by Joan Myers Brown. The Association provides a network, formal newsletters, a directory of dance artists and organizations, and published papers, as well as establishing the annual Conference and Festival. In addition, The Association also responds to and initiates dialogue around issues that impact the Black dance community as well as the dance community at large; and

WHEREAS, IABD is the first national and international organization responsible for preserving and promoting dance by people of African descent. Moreover, The Association is an internationally recognized political forum and provides networking for administrators, educators, choreographers, and dancers; and serves as a nationally recognized political forum for addressing critical issues and concerns; and

WHEREAS, This year, The IABD will put on its 32nd Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance, which started in Philadelphia, in collaboration with PHILADANCO!, The Philadelphia Dance Company; and

WHEREAS, PHILADANCO! is a Philadelphia-based nonprofit organization founded in 1970 by Joan Myers Brown out of a need for dance opportunities for Black youth. Now, Philadanco! has grown into a nationally-recognized professional dance company, known for its artistic integrity and for providing one of the nation's most innovative and successful dance training programs; and

WHEREAS, Notable Black dancers that have come from Philadelphia include Pearl Bailey, Lola Falana, Judith Jamison, and even the Philadanco! and IABD founder herself, Joan Myers Brown; and

WHEREAS, Joan Myers Brown is also the founder of The Philadelphia School of Dance Arts and is now an honorary chairperson for The International Association of Blacks in Dance. She also founded the International Conference of Black Dance Companies in 1988. She has received several accolades in her lifetime, such as being honored as one of the "Dance Women: Living Legends," in 1997; in 2005, the Kennedy Center honored her as a Master of African American Choreography; and in 2012, she was designated as one of The Ten Best Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, The Festival will include panels, workshops, lectures, demonstrations, dance classes, and performances, as well as an audition series that offers dancers - from students to professionals - the opportunity to audition for positions in dance companies and programs, as well as the chance to earn scholarships for dance programs; and

WHEREAS, The IABD is to be commended for its devotion to Black self-expression through the arts, and for providing a space for Black dancers to present Black culture through this medium for 32 years; and

WHEREAS, There is extraordinary value in an event like the 32nd Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance. This Conference and Festival are not only a series of performances, but an opportunity for the community to learn, as it gives rising dancers the opportunity to be recruited, and even provides scholarship opportunities. This event allows for Black Dance professionals, agents, artistic directors, artists, choreographers, company managers, executive directors, historians, presenters, scholars, teachers, admirers and many others, to gather in a diverse space and share ideas, cultures and experiences. The art of dance has provided immense value to the citizens of the City of Philadelphia, and the work of organizations like The IABD and PHILADANCO! sustain that important legacy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize and congratulate The International Association of Blacks in Dance on hosting their 32nd Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance.