

Legislation Text

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Proclaiming March 2009 as “Deaf History Month”.

The City Council of Philadelphia designates the Month of March 2009, as “Deaf History Month” in Philadelphia and celebrates deaf history, particularly key events in deaf heritage.

WHEREAS, Deaf History Month covers the period of March 13 to April 15 and celebrates deaf history, particularly key events in deaf heritage; and

WHEREAS, On April 15, 1817, “Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons,” opens as the first permanent public school for the deaf; and

WHEREAS, America owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, an energetic Congregational minister who became interested in helping his neighbor's young deaf daughter, Alice Cogswell; and

WHEREAS, On April 8, 1864, President Lincoln signed the charter establishing Gallaudet University as the first college for the deaf marking an important milestone in the history of education for deaf people; and

WHEREAS, This event is known as Gallaudet Charter Day and Gallaudet remains the only liberal arts college for deaf people in the United States and the world; and

WHEREAS, Deaf History month begins by commemorating the March 13, 1988 victory of the Deaf President Now movement, when students at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. staged a near riot, demanding a deaf president for the university; and

WHEREAS, Deaf History Month appears to have had its genesis on March 13, 1997, when the D.C. Public Library had a Deaf History Month event with deaf authors and guest speakers; and

WHEREAS, The popularity of Deaf History Month grew over time, and there is currently an effort under way by the American Library Association and the National Association of the Deaf to get the White House to declare it an official national event.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HILADELPHIA, That the Month of March 2009 be declared “Deaf History Month” and in order to work toward achieving this goal here in Philadelphia, we do hereby encourage all to participate in the celebration of deaf history month and especially the key events in deaf heritage.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Basil Nesheiwat as further evidencing the sincere admiration and gratitude of this legislative body.