

Legislation Text

File #: 120442, **Version:** 0

Honoring the Philadelphia Cultural Fund on its 20th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, The establishment of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund (“Cultural Fund”) was guided by an Ad Hoc Committee on Cultural Funding that was comprised of various arts and civic leaders and this Committee was led by the late John Allen, Artistic Director of the New Freedom Theatre, Cathryn Coate, Executive Director of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Helen Haynes, Executive Director of the Coalition of African American Arts Organizations, and Portia Sperr, Director of the Museums Initiative; and

WHEREAS, Considering the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and the “significant role that arts and cultural organizations and activities play in the quality of life of all Philadelphians,” on May 9, 1991, former Council members John F. Street and Joan Specter introduced and passed Bill No. 1424 that authorized “City officials to file articles of incorporation to establish a non-profit corporation for the purpose of providing funding to arts and cultural institutions, organizations, and activities within the City of Philadelphia”; and

WHEREAS, Through the Ad Hoc Committee, a report was issued that detailed the funding guidelines for grants from the proposed Cultural Fund and, on February 18, 1992, former Mayor Edward G. Rendell and former Council President John F. Street signed as incorporators and successfully filed the articles of incorporation for the Cultural Fund with the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, The Cultural Fund is an independent, community focused, non-profit corporation, with a mission of supporting and enhancing the cultural life and vitality of the City and its residents and its goal is to promote arts and culture as engines of social and economic development in Philadelphia. The Cultural Fund is governed by an 18 member Board of Directors of which the Mayor appoints four members and City Council appoints four members and the remaining 10 members are community directors; and

WHEREAS, The Cultural Fund is managed by a lean staff of a part-time manager and a part-time clerical assistant and its office space, computer equipment as well as printing, mailing, and administrative services are provided by the Commerce Department and, considering this lean operation, the Cultural Fund’s administrative budget has remained minimal over the past two decades, comprising 7% of its annual operating budget; and

WHEREAS, The Cultural Fund is committed to an open and peer driven grant approval process with grants being made by a peer review panel through an open application process and, through this process, over \$33 million has been invested into Philadelphia’s arts and culture community over the past two decades and last year alone, over \$1.8 million was distributed to more than 200 organizations; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and City Council have consistently funded the Cultural Fund, from \$440,000 in 1994 to a peak of \$3.2 million in FY10 and, in that year, the Cultural Fund established a new initiative entitled Youth Arts Enrichment Grants for projects that enrich the lives of young people through individual grants up to \$50,000; and

WHEREAS, The recent economic and cultural renaissance of Philadelphia is a testament to the long

term investment in the City's rich cultural life and, over the last twenty years, Cultural Fund grants have empowered a rich variety of arts and cultural groups, ensuring that the City of Philadelphia and its residents have accessible and diverse cultural opportunities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor the Philadelphia Cultural Fund on its 20th Anniversary.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to representatives of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.