

## Legislation Text

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Honoring and Celebrating Philadelphia's own living local legends, Judge Doris Smith-Ribner, Action News Sports Anchor Keith Russell and Ms. Gerri H. Walker on the occasion of Black History Month.

WHEREAS, Black History Month is an annual celebration of important people and events in the history of the African Diaspora, instilling in African Americans, a sense of tradition, knowledge of self and a link to African culture; and

WHEREAS, As we acknowledge our ancestors during this month of reflection, it is equally important to honor and celebrate those amongst us that are laying the foundation for the next generation. Philadelphia has always played a prominent role in African American history and Judge Doris Smith-Ribner, Action News Sports Anchor Keith Russell and Ms. Gerri H. Walker add to this great legacy of African American excellence; and

WHEREAS, Judge Smith-Ribner practiced law in Allegheny County for over twelve years, served as Solicitor for five years to the Allegheny county Controller and has launched three successful elections to the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. She was selected as a member of the Pennsylvania Judicial auditing Agency in 1991 and also served as its Chairperson from 1999 through 2004. Judge Smith-Ribner also developed a successful Commonwealth Court statewide mediation program which is now in its sixth year operation; and

WHEREAS, Keith Russell, has returned to his hometown of Philadelphia after graduating from Morgan State University in 1995 with a BA in Telecommunications, becoming a sportscaster in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Jackson, Mississippi and in Bristol, Connecticut for ESPN. Currently, Mr. Russell is the sports anchor for Channel 6 Action News where he has brought an outside the box delivery and non-stop creativity to his viewers. He has interviewed everyone from Bill Cosby to Dr. J. Born and raised in the West Oaklane section of Philadelphia and a graduate of the 250<sup>th</sup> class of Central High School, Mr. Russell continues to be an inspiration to Philadelphia's aspiring young journalists who have the dream to travel and experience the world through journalism; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Gerri H. Walker has dedicated nearly thirty years of civic and entrepreneurial leadership in the City of Philadelphia. She was the first African American woman to serve as Commerce Director and City Representative for the City of Philadelphia, retaining and attracting businesses and development and expanding the City's business base and skyline. As President and CEO of Diamond Cutter, LLC, she focuses on wellness options and develops customized programs for clients providing personal and group coaching in the mental, physical and spiritual aspects of their lives, now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby honors and celebrates Judge Doris A. Smith-Ribner, Mr. Keith Russell and Ms. Gerri Walker this Black History Month for their contributions to the history of African Americans in Philadelphia and for their continued efforts to paving the way for all young African American students who strive for excellence.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Judge Doris A Smith-Ribner, Mr. Keith Russell and Ms. Gerri Walker, as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

