

## Legislation Text

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Honoring and congratulating Royal Izakaya's Jesse Ito for his nomination as a finalist for a 2024 James Beard Award.

WHEREAS, The James Beard Foundation's mission is to celebrate, support and elevate the people behind America's food culture and champion a standard of good food anchored in talent, equity and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Each year, the James Beard Foundation Awards, founded in 1990, recognize select chefs and restaurateurs for their inspiring and innovative culinary work. The Foundation also honors writers, journalists, and documentarians whose work explores how gastronomy drives cultural development and policy change; and

WHEREAS, Jesse Ito's success is built upon a family history and dedication to sushi. Masaharu Ito, Jesse's father, moved from Japan to South Jersey in his early twenties and opened his own sushi restaurant, Fuji. Jesse worked at Fuji as a dishwasher and prep cooking before joining his father behind the sushi bar at age seventeen and was determined to build upon the foundation of the craft laid by his father, while elevating the industry. Jesse Ito opened Royal Sushi & Izakaya in 2016 as a restaurant offering a world-class sushi bar featuring a 16-stage omakase experience; and

WHEREAS, Ito is no stranger to culinary awards, having secured the 2019 Rising Star Chef of the Year Award, which recognizes pioneering chefs under 30 who will "make a significant impact on the industry for years to come". Additionally, he has a grand total of seven James Beard Foundation Award nominations to his name; and

WHEREAS, In 2024, Jesse Ito was the sole Philadelphia-based nominee for Best Chef: Mid-Atlantic; and

WHEREAS, This nomination is the continuation of a career demonstrating high level of mastery of the culinary arts and hospitality, showcasing the best of what Philadelphia's culinary scene has to offer, and attracting Philadelphians and guests alike an unmatched culinary experience; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors and recognizes Royal Izakaya's Jesse Ito for his recent naming as a finalist for the James Beard Award.