

## Legislation Text

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Mourning the death and honoring the memory of Lucien E. Blackwell.

WHEREAS, Lucien Blackwell was one of eleven children. He learned the importance of independence, hard work, sharing and family from his parents, Thomas William and Mary Ellen Blackwell. He left high school early to strike out on his own, joining the Longshoremen's Union in 1950 and working his way up to the presidency. He was a decorated veteran of the Korean War, where he became a leader and light-middleweight champion of his Division. He would remain not only a boxer, but also a fighter, for the rest of his life; and

WHEREAS, On January 24, 2003, God in His wisdom took Lucien Blackwell from our midst. His death was so sudden and so unexpected that we can hardly believe he is gone from us, because he was a beloved fixture in this City and a part of the heart of untold thousands of citizens who over the years became his huge extended family. As a Union leader, a State Representative, a City Councilman, a United States Congressman, and a citizen, he sought to serve, to help, to lead by example and to attain justice for all. In this quest, he became an inspirational leader, responsible for major initiatives in Philadelphia, including the minority set-aside legislation, the construction of the Convention Center and policies affecting vendors, the homeless and those in need of assistance; and

WHEREAS, Lucien Blackwell became the voice of the poor, who looked to him as their champion. He became increasingly statesmanlike, working with community organizations, business groups, elected and appointed officials and religious leaders to "level the playing field" in housing, employment and economic development. He became the mentor of young people and aspiring politicians. He was truly the most influential African American of his time, and he changed the way we perceive politics in this City; and

WHEREAS, We will miss the strong, unerring ethic of Mr. Lucien E. Blackwell, and we will never forget his insistence on striving always to do right in the eyes of his colleagues, his large and loving family, his friends and his legions of admirers. He was a true friend to this City, and he made it a better place. He will live in history and in the spirit of Philadelphia, because he was a shining star, filled with hope and laughter and love; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby mourn the death and celebrate the life of Lucien E. Blackwell. To his family and to his enormous extended family, we offer our most profound condolences.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Lucien E. Blackwell as evidence of the sincere sympathy of this legislative body.