

Legislation Text

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Congratulating and recognizing Carl R. Greene for his achievements during ten years as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Housing Authority-over which time he has transformed the agency from one of the lowest rated housing authorities in the nation to among the most respected for property development and management, financial innovation and strength, and customer satisfaction. He has dramatically changed the look and condition of public housing in Philadelphia as well as the public image of PHA.

WHEREAS, Mr. Greene has revolutionized PHA's portfolio with a 10-year \$1.4 billion dollar construction program that to date has created more than 6,000 units of attractive, safe and affordable housing, 3,000 new units and 3,000 completely renovated, with another 1,500 units either underway or planned; and

WHEREAS; Under Mr. Greene, PHA has attracted significant private investment into its new developments, accounting for about a quarter of all construction funds raised. PHA has become a national model for other housing authorities with its use of Low Income Housing Tax Credits and bonds; and

WHEREAS, PHA has revitalized some of Philadelphia's most distressed neighborhoods with well-designed, low-rise housing developments complete with full amenities. Members of the public who see developments such as Richard Allen Homes, Greater Grays Ferry Estates, Lucien E. Blackwell Homes, Cambridge Plaza, Martin Luther King Plaza, Falls Ridge, and the brand new Ludlow Homes are surprised to learn that they are public housing sites. They are even more surprised to learn that PHA has included homeownership at most new sites to further stabilize the neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, A study by Econsult showed that over the period from 1999-2004, property values of homes surrounding PHA rebuilt sites grew at a rate 2.5 times faster than the city as a whole. This reflects Mr. Greene's belief that PHA can build quality housing for low-income families while improving the neighborhood for all residents; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Greene launched a first of its kind in the nation Pre-Apprenticeship program in the building trades, a program that has helped public housing residents turn their lives around and which has provided a pipeline of skilled minority workers in the construction trades. PHA has graduated more than 400 men and women from the program with most entering union jobs in construction; and

WHEREAS, PHA far exceeds federal guidelines for contracting with minority and women-owned businesses, awarding more than 30% of its contracts to those firms in the past year. This improvement is the result of Mr. Greene's insistence that all qualified companies get an equal opportunity to compete for PHA business; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Greene has overseen a major upgrade in PHA's technology systems to promote better customer service, efficiency and accountability. Standard and Poor's says PHA has the most sophisticated information technology systems of any authority that it has evaluated; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Greene's efforts have also paid off with a "Strong" rating by Standard & Poor's, the highest rating awarded to any public housing authority in the country. The rating is an endorsement of PHA's property portfolio, its high quality management and its service to residents. PHA also receives S&P's highest credit

rating; and

WHEREAS, Working with a citizens advisory committee from Northeast Philadelphia, Mr. Greene brought major changes to the Housing Choice Voucher Program, including a seven-year limit for the benefit, increased educational opportunities for clients, and aggressive enforcement of admissions standards, property inspections and rules for both clients and landlords. The voucher program, once vilified by the public, is now an accepted part of the affordable housing mix in the city; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL, Congratulates and recognizes Carl R. Greene for his achievements during ten years as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Housing Authority-over which time he has transformed the agency from one of the lowest rated housing authorities in the nation to among the most respected for property development and management, financial innovation and strength, and customer satisfaction. He has dramatically changed the look and condition of public housing in Philadelphia as well as the public image of PHA; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Mr. Carl Greene as a sincere expression of this Council's recognition and appreciation.