Legislation Text

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Urging the members of the National Baseball Hall of Fame's "Golden Era Committee" to nominate and elect former Philadelphia Phillies great Dick Allen to the National Baseball Hall of Fame as part of the Class of 2015.

WHEREAS, Richard Anthony "Dick" Allen was born on March 8, 1942 in Wampum, PA, near the state's western border with Ohio. Dick, along with his brothers Coy, Caesar, Hank and Ron were multi-sport stars for Wampum High School, winning a state championship in basketball and excelling in baseball. After meeting with scouts from multiple teams and with the help of his mother, Era Allen, Dick signed a contract with the Philadelphia Phillies, including a signing bonus for the then sizable sum of $70,000; and

WHEREAS, Allen played his A and AA ball in Elmira, NY and Williamsport, PA respectively, showing tremendous potential, specifically at the plate. In 1963, Allen was promoted to the Phillies AAA team in Little Rock, AR. Dick was the first black professional baseball player in Arkansas history, and he faced racial epithets and degrading remarks from opening day on. Allen channeled his anger productively, and instead of reacting to the malicious and hurtful remarks levied at him, Allen dominated the International League, hitting 33 home runs and 97 RBI's. His time in Arkansas, while challenging, served as a turning point for sports in the state. African-American fans began attending games for the first time, and the stands were integrated in a never before seen way. Allen was called up to the big leagues in late 1963 by then Phillies manager Gene Mauch. Dick saw limited action that September in only 10 games, but the stage was set for a breakout performance in 1964; and

WHEREAS, The 1964 season started as a dream for the Phillies and their fans, as the team stormed to a big lead in the National League. Allen was one of the main reasons for their early success hitting .318, with 29 HR's, 91 RBI's and playing all 162 games. The Phillies struggled down the stretch, and after being up 6.5 games with only 12 to play, they finished just one game behind the St. Louis Cardinals, missing out on a World Series match-up with the New York Yankees. The sting of the Phillies "Phold" was strong, but Allen's first season was still an undeniable success as he was named National League Rookie of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Allen would play five more seasons in his first stint with the Phillies. Allen would average 30 HR's, 90 RBI's and 150 hits per season from 1965-1969. Dick was voted a member of the All-Star Team three times, and was fourth in the MVP vote in 1966; and

WHEREAS, Allen was known as a prolific slugger, swinging a monstrous 40-ounce bat, substantially heavier than most sluggers of his day. Eighteen of Allen's home runs at Connie Mack Stadium cleared the 65ft high left -field grandstands, and two of his shots cleared the equally high scoreboard in right-centerfield; and

WHEREAS, Allen was traded from the Phillies to the St. Louis Cardinals in 1969, and he would continue his career with stops in Los Angeles and Chicago as a member of the White Sox. Allen would win the Most Valuable Player Award as a member of the White Sox in 1972. Allen returned to the Phillies in 1975, and was part of the first Division winning team in over 20 years in 1976. Dick finished his career in 1977 as a member of the Oakland Athletics; and

WHEREAS, Although overlooked for many years by Hall of Fame voters, new statistical analyses show just how impressive Allen was during his career. During Allen's prime from 1964-1973 his OPS+ was greater than Hall of Famers Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Willie Stargell and Frank Robinson. Over the course of his career, Allen's OPS+ was higher than Mays, Aaron and Joe DiMaggio. Also, Allen's WAR (Wins Above Replacement), another modern sabermetric stat used to determine the value of one player over a replacement, is 58.7, within the top 200 players of all-time and ahead of hall-of-famers Stargell, Enos Slaughter and Hank Greenberg; and

WHEREAS, The Golden Era vote in 2015 may be the last opportunity for Dick Allen to be voted into the Hall of Fame. Allen's son, Richard Allen, Jr. is leading the effort to elect the now 72-year-old Allen as the culmination of his tremendous career. Allen's career statistics and the perseverance he showed in front of often rabid racism from fans should be enough for voters to finally give him this one last honor. As an all-time Phillies great, the City of Philadelphia believes Dick Allen deserves a place in Cooperstown, NY as a member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the members of the Golden Era Committee of the National Baseball Hall of Fame are urged to nominate and elect former Philadelphia Phillies great Richard Anthony "Dick" Allen as a member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame in the Class of 2015.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the members of the Golden Era Committee of the National Baseball Hall of Fame as evidence of the sentiments of this legislative body.

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