

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and acknowledging June Washikita O'Neill for her leadership and accomplishments as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and for her strong advocacy on behalf of Philadelphia's arts and cultural community.

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Cultural Fund (PCF) is a nonprofit corporation established by Philadelphia's Mayor and City Council in 1991 to support and enhance the cultural life and vitality of the City of Philadelphia and its residents. The Fund promotes arts and culture as engines of social, educational and economic development in the Philadelphia region. Grants are made from a City budget allocation to the Cultural Fund for operating support of Philadelphia-based arts and cultural organizations; and

WHEREAS, During her twelve-year tenure as the leader of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, first as a part-time consultant and then as full-time Director, Ms. O'Neill successfully navigated the organization through the 2008 economic downturn and ensuing cuts to funding, and last year led a successful effort in City Council to restore those funds. She developed policies and streamlined the grant process for the full range of project and operating grants offered by PCF, and spearheaded the organization's 2013-2016 long-range and succession planning, and strengthened PCF as a private, nonprofit independent foundation. In 2014, 288 organizations received general operating grants in what proved to be one of PCF's most successful years; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund is grateful for Ms. O'Neill's leadership and advocacy on behalf of the Fund, which has resulted in increased general operating support for all of Philadelphia's arts and cultural organizations, especially the smaller neighborhood organizations. In addition, she is leaving PCF a solid organizational and financial framework, which will keep the funding process going without interruption and make certain a seamless transition for the Board and the next Executive Director; and

WHEREAS, Prior to her tenure with the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Ms. O'Neill served as the first Executive Director for the Leeway Foundation, and she has also worked with several nonprofit arts organizations in Philadelphia, including Philadelphia Festival Theatre for New Plays and Settlement Music School; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Ms. O'Neill has served on several nonprofit boards, including the Japanese House and Garden in Fairmount Park, Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation, and CultureTrust. She also spent eight years as a Judge of Elections at her neighborhood polling place in Chestnut Hill, where she lives with her husband Tim, their son Luke and their dog Kira; and

WHEREAS, Ms. O'Neill's passionate leadership will be greatly missed by the Board of Directors and staff of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, a wide range of PCF's stakeholders, and the arts and cultural community at-large. PCF shall honor her legacy, and express its gratitude for leaving the Fund in a strong position, by moving forward with the same spirit that animated her work at its helm. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, that we recognize and acknowledge June Washikita O'Neill for her leadership and accomplishments as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and for her strong advocacy on behalf of Philadelphia's arts and cultural community.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that an engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to June Washikita O'Neill, as an expression of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.