

Legislation Text

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Honoring the life and mourning the loss of Samuel Staten, Sr.

WHEREAS, The Greater Philadelphia region and the nation experienced a great loss with the passing of Samuel Staten, Sr. on Tuesday April 26, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Staten, Sr. was born in Jacksonville, Florida, came to Philadelphia as a youth and was educated in the Philadelphia School system; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Staten, Sr. had been in the labor industry for over 50 years. He rose through the ranks working 10 years as a construction laborer before becoming a Local 332 Field Representative in 1970; and

WHEREAS, In 1973 he was appointed Assistant Business Manager and in August 1978 he was elected the Business Manager, and held that position for three decades, and later served in a advisory role; and

WHEREAS, As the longtime Business Manager of Laborers' Local #332 and the former Secretary-Treasurer of the Laborers' District Council of the Metropolitan Area of Philadelphia & Vicinity, Samuel Staten, Sr. without question deserves much of the credit for the tremendous gains that his beloved Laborers Union achieved under his forty years leadership; and

WHEREAS, In March 2010, Sam officially retired from Laborers' Local #332 and the Laborers' District Council; and

WHEREAS, At a tribute dinner in honor of Sam's retirement in 2010, Sam shared these thoughts:

I can remember the old timers talking about how things had changed and I couldn't imagine what they were saying. Now today I look back and think about the roads over which I've traveled and it's amazing. I can remember my first pay rate was \$2.60 per hour. We had no health and welfare; we had no pension, dental or legal plan. It was a different world for Laborers. We have come a long way and now have the power to truly help those in need; and

WHEREAS, Sam ended his remarks in the impassioned tone many came to admire and respect:

Never forget our purpose. Never feel that this fight is over. There will always be people who think that we don't deserve it and the moment you take your eyes off the prize, we'll lose; and

WHEREAS, Sam's leadership did not stop with Laborers' Local 332. He was also a Trustee of the Laborers' District Council Building & Construction Health & Welfare Fund, Delegate to the Philadelphia Building & Construction Trades Council, Board Member of the Philadelphia Housing Authority, Member of the African American Chamber of Commerce, Trustee of the Laborers' District Council Building & Construction Pension Fund, Trustee of the Laborers' District Council Education & Training Fund, Trustee of LECET and the LDC Health & Safety Fund, Trustee of the L.D.C. Legal Fund, President of the Philadelphia Building Trades, Board

Member of the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority, chair of the PCCA Expansion Committee and Board Member of the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Appeals Board; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Staten also had an unwavering commitment to supporting charitable causes, which he made publicly evident on October 3, 1987 at the Friends of Labor Committee dinner being held in his honor. During that event, Mr. Staten was presented with \$25,000 by his members and in the midst of the presentation responded that he felt uncomfortable receiving the gift. Therefore, he donated all of the money to four charitable organizations. Mr. Staten's unselfish nature inspired The Laborers' District Council Charity Fund, now called the Samuel Staten, Sr. Charitable Trust. Staten, Sr. is credited with raising millions of dollars for charity; and

WHEREAS, Staunchly believing that charity begins at home, Sam and his members provided thousands of dollars in scholarships to Local 332 members' children. He also created the Emergency Relief Fund, which aids members during times of catastrophic hurdles; and

WHEREAS, Through his union leadership, he has adamantly encouraged his members to get involved with local community organizations, as well as social and political movements. Because of his keen awareness of the power of Labor, Local 332 has become a calling stop for many successful political candidates and leaders throughout the Philadelphia region; and

WHEREAS, Sam was a genuine family man and the proud father of (9) children; and

WHEREAS, In the words of his son, Samuel Staten, Jr.

Samuel Staten, Sr. was the problem-solver, everyone respected his opinion because he had the unique ability to bring all sides together. However, if you tested him, you would quickly find out how tough of a labor leader he was. ... He was an innovator and a tireless advocate for working families. He was a man of his word, if he told you he was going to do something, it was done. He was loved and respected by all of labor and management; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it honors and recognizes the dynamic life contributions of Samuel Staten, Sr.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Staten Family as further evidence of the sincere admiration and appreciation of this legislative body.