



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and Honoring the Late James David “Buddy” Ryan for his Service in the Korean War and His Contributions to Philadelphia as an NFL Coach.

WHEREAS, James “Buddy” Ryan enlisted in the National Guard at age 17, and within the year was sent to fight in the Korean War, arriving there on Christmas Day, 1951. He served in the 179th Infantry Regiment, Fox Company; and

WHEREAS, Despite his young age, Buddy Ryan was quickly promoted to Platoon Sergeant, Sergeant First Class, and Master Sergeant due to his exemplary natural leadership abilities and dedication to service; and

WHEREAS, Those who served under Sergeant Ryan described him as a motivating and inviting leader, even inspiring soldiers to volunteer for night patrols, which were previously undesirable, when he was leading the group. He also rescued a friend from a rice paddy when the friend had been shot in the shoulder; and

WHEREAS, After completing his service in the military, Buddy Ryan returned home to complete his education at Oklahoma A&M University, now known as Oklahoma State University. After playing collegiate football, he began coaching at the collegiate level as a defensive line coach at the University of Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, Buddy Ryan began his NFL coaching career in 1968 as a defensive line coach for the New York Jets. He spent eight seasons with the Jets, two with the Minnesota Vikings, and then was hired as the Defensive Coordinator for the Chicago Bears. Ryan’s “46” defensive scheme set several records, and Ryan’s defense led the Bears to the 1985 Super Bowl championship; and

WHEREAS, In 1986, Buddy Ryan was hired to be the head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles. He led the Eagles to playoff appearances in 1988, 1989, and 1990. In five seasons with Ryan at the helm, the Eagles had a 43-35-1 record; and

WHEREAS, Through his hard work and intentional honesty with the fans of Philadelphia, Buddy Ryan grew to be one of the most beloved and revered coaches in Eagles history. He brought in players that Philadelphians know and love such as Reggie White, Clyde Simmons, Jerome Brown, Mike Pitts, and Mike Golic; and

WHEREAS, Buddy Ryan passed away on June 28, 2016 at age 85 after a long battle with cancer; and

WHEREAS, The dedication to the fans, the players, and the game that Buddy showed throughout his five years in Philadelphia and his entire career (including 26 seasons coaching in the NFL) led Philadelphians to also have a greater dedication to the Eagles and the game of football; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize and honor the late James David “Buddy” Ryan for his service in the Korean War and his contributions to Philadelphia as an NFL head coach.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the family of James David “Buddy” Ryan, evidencing the sincere respect of this legislative body.