Legislation Text

File #: 170610, **Version:** 0

Recognizing, honoring, and celebrating the life and legacy of Ahmeenah Young for her dedication to women, minorities, and the disadvantaged, as well as her overall commitment to the City of Philadelphia

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah Young, a lifelong activist, has been described as a "mentor," "role model," "trailblazer," "pioneer," "force of inspiration to many African-American women in business and government," "the Harriet Tubman of the hospitality industry," and "one of the greatest citizens for the sake of this City;" and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah was born in South Philadelphia and educated at Maria Goretti High School and Temple University, where she majored in psychology; and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah began her career at the American Friends Service Committee, where she organized workers and helped to elevate women and people of color. Later, she worked for the Mental Health Consortium in West Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah co-directed the opening of the Pennsylvania Convention Center in 1993 and directed the Center's affirmative-action team. She later opened the Reading Terminal Trainshed in 1994. Over the next few decades, she held several important jobs at the Convention Center, but also left for stints as a headhunter specializing in executive hospitality placements and as General Manager of the Independence Visitors Center Corp; and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah became the first African American and first female President and Chief Executive Officer of the Convention Center - a job she held from September 2008 through December 2013; and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah's promotion to President/CEO coincided with the Center's $787 million expansion, and she made it her mission to ensure that women, minorities, disadvantaged, and small-business owners received almost one-third of the project's contracts. The expansion was the largest project in the history of the commonwealth and it made the Convention Center the leading economic engine for the region's hospitality industry; and

WHEREAS, After retiring from the Convention Center, Ahmeenah continued to participate in the Center's Expansion Art Project Committee, served on numerous boards, and recently joined the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board; and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah passed away on Friday, June 2, 2017, at her home in West Mount Airy, just three weeks shy of what would have been her 70th birthday; and

WHEREAS, Ahmeenah is survived by her two grown children - a daughter, Asiya Young, and a son, Pakeso Young, and their respective sons, Kumasi Mandela and Ayinde; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes, honors, and celebrates the life and legacy of Ahmeenah Young for her dedication to women, minorities, and the

disadvantaged, as well as her overall commitment to the City of Philadelphia.

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