Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring the Johnson House Historic Site's annual Juneteenth Festival, the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the emancipation of African-American slaves throughout the Confederate South.

WHEREAS, On June 19, 1865, slaves in Galveston, Texas were informed that they were free, long after slaves were emancipated in all other Confederate states. Former slaves coined the phrase Juneteenth to celebrate their newfound freedom by combining the month of the occurrence (June) with the day (19th); and

WHEREAS, Located at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Washington Lane in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, Johnson House stands as a site where the principles of the 1688 Germantown Protest Against Slavery were acted upon, and is designated as a National Historic Landmark; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia and the Johnson House have a rich history in the anti-slavery movement; the Johnson House was a "station" on the Underground Railroad and a meeting space for abolitionists, including conductors Harriet Tubman and William Still; and

WHEREAS, Johnson House Historic Site is a historic house museum and a center for social advocacy that represents what everyday people have done and can do to make a difference in their community and beyond by creating interactive educational opportunities, fostering community initiatives, and preserving the historic integrity of the house, grounds and outlier buildings; and

WHEREAS, Johnson House Historic Site will celebrate Juneteenth by organizing and planning for its 10th Annual Juneteenth Festival on Saturday, June 17, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Festival attendees enjoy shopping, the arts, food, educational information from diverse vendors and the opportunity to attend a State of Black Women panel focused on trends, personal experiences, opportunities and challenges faced by black women in Philadelphia and throughout the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors the Johnson House Historic Site's annual Juneteenth Festival, the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the emancipation of African-American slaves throughout the Confederate South.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the board of Johnson House Historic Site for their leadership in hosting the annual Philadelphia Juneteenth Festival, and as further evidence of the sincere admiration of this legislative body.