

Legislation Text

File #: 180196, **Version:** 0

Apologizing to The People's Republic Of China for the damage caused by a visitor to Philadelphia to a World Heritage Artifact loaned by The Shaanxi Cultural Heritage Promotion Center to the Franklin Institute.

WHEREAS, The People's Republic of China has a rich and important cultural and historical heritage that extends back thousands of years; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, one of the world's greatest archeological finds was made near the City of Xi'an when the mausoleum of China's first emperor-Qin Shi Huang Di-was uncovered. Qin ruled from 246 to 210 B.C., and is credited with unifying the country's warring kingdoms, ending feudalism, and building the first version of The Great Wall of China; and

WHEREAS, Qin also ordered the construction of his mausoleum that would cover an area of 38 square miles, use more than 700,000 laborers, and take 36 years to complete. Buried with the First Emperor are many archeological treasures including an incredible army of 8,000 life-sized terra-cotta soldiers, horses, and chariots; and

WHEREAS, In 1987, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization designated the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor as a World Heritage Site-including the terra-cotta warriors-as one of the World's most important archeological finds; and

WHEREAS, Ten of the invaluable terra-cotta warriors and other artifacts have been loaned to The Franklin Institute by The Shaanxi Cultural Heritage Promotion Center for a two-city extraordinary exhibit tour where Philadelphia is the only East Coast location; and

WHEREAS, On December 21, 2017, a visitor to Philadelphia attending a social event at the Franklin Institute was able, as result of a failure of security, to enter the then-closed "Terra-Cotta Warriors of the First Emperor Exhibit" and broke-off and stole the thumb of the "Cavalryman" figure; and

WHEREAS, The thumb was recovered, and the thief was arrested and charged with theft and concealment of a major artwork, as well as interstate transportation of stolen goods; and

WHEREAS, This incident is an embarrassment to the City of Philadelphia, and one that the City hopes will not diminish the good will and good relations between the City of Philadelphia and the People's Republic of China; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby apologizes to the People's Republic of China for the damage caused by a visitor to Philadelphia to a World Heritage Artifact loaned by the Shaanxi Cultural Heritage Promotion Center to the Franklin Institute.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Shaanxi Cultural Heritage Promotion Center to memorialize that sincere sentiment.

