

Legislation Text

File #: 180709, **Version:** 0

Commending the Please Touch Museum for its Launch of Pride Family Weekend.

WHEREAS, Founded in 1976, the Please Touch Museum has been dedicated to the cultivation of young minds through play. The Please Touch Museum was the first in the City to specialize in exhibits for families with children younger than seven years. Currently, the Please Touch Museum includes permanent exhibits, temporary exhibits, collections, as well as programs open to the public; and

WHEREAS, *Growing Young Minds*, a report by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, stresses the importance of museums and libraries in the development of children. The report commends establishments such as the Please Touch Museum for being an excellent facilitator of creating bright and inquisitive minds of the future; and

WHEREAS, In 2018 the Please Touch Museum elected to participate in a celebration of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and sexual diversity by hosting a Pride Family Festival. According to the Please Touch Museum, the Pride Family Festival was meant to “celebrate the many ways families come together and everything that makes people unique”, and proved to do so by exhibiting events and performances such as Drag Queen Storytime and Self-Empowerment and Acceptance; and

WHEREAS, The Please Touch Museum experienced negative backlash in response to its efforts to initiate the Pride Family Festival. Comments on Facebook and other forms of social media deemed the Pride Family Festival events as “inappropriate to subject children of these ages to things like this”; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) formally states: "Respect and tolerance are liberating acts, whereby the differences of others are recognized as the same as our own..." UNESCO further emphasizes fighting intolerance through law, education, access to information, individual awareness, and local solutions; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia also expresses support for early exposure to diversity in gender identification and sexual orientation. The City established the Office of LGBT Affairs in 2008. Residing in City Hall, this Office “works to foster equal working and living conditions for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people and to advocate for LGBTQ issues in all areas of City government”; and

WHEREAS, LGBT individuals are deserving of the fundamental rights and privileges enjoyed by all citizens. Although the Please Touch Museum recognized the potential of loss of revenue and members in pursuing the Pride Family Festival, their President and CEO, Patricia D. Wellenbach, stated that “at no time did we consider cancelling the program.” She further stated: “A community that feels accepted and valued and an organization that is energized for the next challenge may be the ultimate statement of what diversity and inclusion can really achieve”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby commend the Please Touch Museum for remaining firm in convictions to emphasize education and understanding of tolerance in the

face of adversity, and we encourage other establishments to do the same.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of the resolution be presented to the Please Touch Museum as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

Blondell Reynolds Brown
Councilwoman At-Large
June 21, 2018