

Legislation Text

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Honoring Vernon Odom as he retires from his position as an *Action News Reporter* for 6ABC after 42 years.

WHEREAS, Mr. Odom has been covering the Philadelphia news for over four decades and his reign on *Action News* has spanned the terms of seven mayors; and

WHEREAS, Arriving in Philadelphia in 1976, Mr. Odom has become a Philadelphia institution through his to-the-point interview style and his empathetic, fair approach to reporting; and

WHEREAS, Educated at Morehouse College for his undergraduate degree and Columbia University for his post-graduate degree in broadcast journalism, Mr. Odom has spent the past fifty years as a reporter; and

WHEREAS, Born in Atlanta, Georgia and raised in Akron, Ohio, journalism runs in Mr. Odom's family. Mr. Odom's great-grandfather launched the second African American run newspaper in the nation. His sister, Maida Odom, was a long-time reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and now teaches journalism at Temple University. Mr. Odom's wife Wanda Motley Odom with whom he has two children, is also a former *Inquirer* Reporter; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Odom got his start as a reporter in Georgia covering stories in the deep, still partially segregated South. The first news story that accelerated him to national attention was his interview with Coretta Scott King after Martin Luther King's assassination. It was an event that shook the nation and Mr. Odom had the first and only interview for days; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Odom has covered momentous events both in Philadelphia and around the world. In Philadelphia, he's covered many big stories such as the accident at Three Mile Island, the MOVE disaster, and Wilson Goode's election as the City's mayor and the first African American politician to hold that position. Mr. Odom has reported from hot spots like post-Cold War Russia and Somalia where he covered the humanitarian crisis. He covered the release of Nelson Mandela and South Africa's first free elections. Of his career as a reporter, Mr. Odom says, "it's been a great ride and a ringside seat to the world"; and

WHEREAS, With his unshakable understanding of politics, Mr. Odom has excelled in his career. His ability to ask direct, well-informed questions causes some politicians to squirm but helps Mr. Odom get to the heart of the matter and tell the story; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Odom's peers describe him as a mentor for young reporters and his interviewees say that he is so likeable that even when he is reporting on a story that is unfavorable for them, they can't help but answer his questions; and

WHEREAS, Recently awarded "Person of the Year" by Broadcast Pioneers of Philadelphia, Mr. Odom

represents the best of the best. Throughout Mr. Odom's career, the realm of newscasting has changed tremendously but Mr. Odom has remained a steady, deep voiced presence that viewers can trust to put the story first; and

WHEREAS, Although Mr. Odom has retired, he has no plans of slowing down. Future plans include a potential book reflecting on his fifty years as a reporter, and voice-over work that he's previously had to turn down. Mr. Odom loves the news and therefore, will always be ready to provide commentary, analysis, or give lectures on the news; and

WHEREAS, Vernon Odom has earned the adoration of our great City through his commitment to steadfast and honest reporting; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby recognizes and honors Vernon Odom for his service to the Philadelphia community.