



Legislation Text

File #: 190075, **Version:** 0

Honoring the Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, The Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) High-Speed Line, began operation in 1969, was the first of an entirely new generation of mass transportation. The rail line provided South Jersey commuters with a quick, inexpensive, and reliable trip to Philadelphia. The high-speed rail line provided an original running time of 22 minutes from Lindenwold to 15/16th & Locust in Philadelphia. Similar trips by car and bus were 45 and 60 minutes respectively; and

WHEREAS, The vehicles were automated trains which operated on a dedicated right-of-way at speeds far exceeding those of the neighboring streets. PATCO was the first rail line in the country to offer a direct challenge to the private automobile - a remarkable achievement and one of deep significance for the future of commuters in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The new vehicles were completely automated. The train operators had to only push a button to start the train and to open and close the doors at each station. The operators also had the ability to stop the train in an emergency and operate under manual control. Under normal operation, the train is controlled by signals transmitted through the rails which allowed the PATCO trains to operate at an original speed of 75 mph; and

WHEREAS, Personal comfort was provided for the public, the cars were designed to be spacious, extra wide doors allowed passengers to enter and exit, temperature and humidity control, as well as enough seats for all passengers. Seats were designed to be "roomiest" seats ever made. Seating was also designed to fit the passenger's body better; and

WHEREAS, Train operation was created to operate at a frequency such that commuters had little time to sit around the station. What few minutes commuters did have were spent in pleasant, modern stations. The air-conditioned stations interiors were designed to feature a clean-lined combination of glass, tile, and concrete - materials believed to be attractively utilized and easy to maintain. Glass bordered entrances and head houses projected an effect of spaciousness; and

WHEREAS, To attract commuters to the stations, ample parking was provided at each station. Parking lots were created with ample lighting, fully paved, and drop off locations referred to as "Kiss and Ride" stops - which allowed commuters to be driven to the station and dropped off or picked up; and

WHEREAS, Over the fifty years of service, PATCO has undergone changes to adapt to the success it has generated. Parking lots have been expanded to accommodating increased number of commuters driving to the stations, stations have been modernized and improved with the installation of elevators and signage, Woodcrest Station was constructed in 1980 with a direct connection to Interstate 295, the fare collection system was replaced with a modern system which is integrated with SEPTA's fare collection systems, and all transit vehicles have been overhauled and installed with modern systems; and

WHEREAS, PATCO continues to provide the level of service which it set out to create fifty years ago. In order to maintain that level of service, continued maintenance and repair along with improvements to infrastructure, are required to be performed every day. The work which PATCO employees perform on the equipment and infrastructure will ensure that the line will continue to operate as intended for the next fifty years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor the Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary.