Legislation Text

File #: 190192, **Version:** 0

Also naming Federal Street, between 19th Street and 20th Street, “Arizona C. Stemons Way”, in honor of Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons, the initiating Founder of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, one of the largest organizations for women in the country.

WHEREAS, Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons was born on January 30, 1898 in Pike County, Missouri. Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons was educated at Douglas School, a public school in Hannibal, Missouri, where she later returned to teach. Upon graduating high school, furthering her education was a priority, leading to her matriculation at Howard University in Washington D.C.; and

WHEREAS, During her time at Howard University, Stemons excelled academically and was inspired by Charles Robert Taylor and Abram Langston Taylor, members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated, to found a sister organization to Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated. Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons encouraged the first group of young women to join her in organizing Zeta Phi Beta Sorority; and

WHEREAS, On January 16, 1920, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated was founded by lead organizer, Arizona Cleaver Stemons, Pearl Anna Neal, Myrtle Tyler Faithful, Viola Tyler Goings and Fannie Pettie Watts; and

WHEREAS, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, constitutionally bound as a sister organization to Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated, sought to encourage the highest standards of scholastic achievement, and foster a greater sense of unity among its members; and

WHEREAS, Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons was the first President of Alpha Chapter and the first National President of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Howard University and earning graduate and post graduate degrees in social work, in 1933, Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons accepted a position with the Philadelphia Department of Public Assistance. Other professional positions she held included case worker for the Philadelphia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Juvenile Court Probation Officer in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons was a Life Member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated and was a charter member of Beta Delta Zeta chapter in Philadelphia, PA and responsible for the chartering of numerous undergraduate and graduate chapters throughout the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons was a resident of South Philadelphia at 1915 Federal Street for 52 years. The property is owned by Beta Delta Zeta Chapter and managed by the Beta Delta Zeta chapter’s Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, After a rewarding life of community-conscious, action-oriented service, her triumphant life ended in March 1980 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons epitomizes the Sorority’s principles of Sisterhood,

Scholarship, Service and Finer Womanhood. As a result of her initial vision, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated is now an international organization that has a membership base of several hundreds of thousands of like-minded women aspiring to uphold the very principles Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, was founded upon; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Federal Street, between 19th Street and 20th Street, shall also be named "Arizona C. Stemons Way," in honor of Arizona Leedonia Cleaver Stemons, the initiating Founder of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, one of the largest organizations for women in the country.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the members of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Beta Delta Zeta chapter, as evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.

powered by Legistar™