

Legislation Text

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Recognizing April 2019 as Autism Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia, and honoring Kambel Smith, accomplished artist and cofounder of the Autisarian Network.

WHEREAS, April is National Autism Awareness Month, a time to educate our community about autism, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), a complex neurological condition that affects, in varying degrees, language and social skill development, characterized by challenges in communication and social interactions, repetitive behaviors and movement, impacting individuals of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recently found that 1 in 68 children meet criteria for autism nationwide; and

WHEREAS, The 2014 Pennsylvania Census Report identified over 4,167 individuals in Philadelphia County with autism receiving services - more than double the previously documented number - the majority of whom are between the ages of 5 and 17 years old, with the number of adults over 21 years old increasing as the population ages; and

WHEREAS, The Autisarian Network was founded by Kambel Smith and his brother Kantai Smith, in order to showcase their artistic endeavors and push back against the notion of autism as a disorder; and

WHEREAS, Through the Autisarian network, Kambel and Kantai are changing the face of autism by encouraging those who suffer from its negative effects to find and use the superhuman abilities within them, and telling the story of the Autisarians, a neuro-atypical race of beings who were created at the beginning of time to enforce the laws of the universe and oversee the evolutionary process of each planet; and

WHEREAS, Kambel has also gained widespread attention and praise for his oil paintings and detailed, large-scale sculptures of historical structures, some of which have been acquired by prestigious institutions, including the American Folk Art Museum and the West Collection; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we recognize April 2019 as Autism Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia and honor Kambel Smith, accomplished artist and cofounder of the Autisarian Network.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Kambel Smith, evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.