



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring Rebecca Rutstein for her dedicated service through art to the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Rebecca Rutstein, the proud mother of two sons and a loving wife, has been awarded artist residencies in Iceland, Hawaii, the Canadian Rockies, Washington's San Juan Islands, California's Santa Cruz Mountains and along the banks of the Gihon River in Vermont. Her City ties include 24 years of residence or maintaining an art studio including her current studio on the 1400 block of North American Street and her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Rutstein holds a BFA, Magna Cum Laude, from Cornell University, with study abroad in Rome, and an MFA from University of Pennsylvania. She has been a visiting artist at museums and universities across the country and enjoys speaking about the intersection of art and science. Rutstein has been represented by the Bridgette Mayer Gallery in Philadelphia since 2001; and

WHEREAS, Rutstein has received the prestigious Pew Fellowship in the Arts, an Independence Foundation Fellowship, a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts grant, and an MIT Ocean Discovery Fellowship. Recently, she was also awarded the Delta Visiting Chair for Global Understanding from University of Georgia, an award given to leading global scholars and creative thinkers including a year-long solo exhibition at the Georgia Museum of Art; and

WHEREAS, Part artist and part ocean explorer, Rutstein - whose work spans painting, sculpture, interactive installation, and public art - creates work at the intersection of art, science, and technology. With interests in geology, microbiology, and marine science, Rutstein is passionate about creating visual experiences that shed light on places and processes hidden from view, forging a dialogue about environmental stewardship in the face of climate change; and

WHEREAS, Most recently, Rutstein has collaborated with scientists as an artist-in-residence on board research vessels on five expeditions at sea, including sailing from the Galápagos Islands to California, Vietnam to Guam, in Tahiti, off the Pacific coast of Costa Rica and in Mexico's Gulf of California. It was on these latter expeditions that Rutstein made her first dives over a mile below to the ocean floor aboard *Alvin*, a fully submersible, 3-person vessel able to withstand the crushing pressure of the extremes of the deep ocean; and

WHEREAS, With over 25 solo exhibitions, Rutstein has exhibited widely in museums, institutions and galleries, and has completed several public art projects. Rutstein's work has been featured on ABC, CBS, and NPR, and in the Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post, Vice, and Philadelphia Magazines. Her work can be found in public collections including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Georgia Museum of Art, Yale University, University of New Mexico, Temple University, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, AT&T, and Delta Airlines; and

WHEREAS, Her most recent work in 2019 was in collaboration with Mural Arts Philadelphia and their talented artists Nathaniel Lee, Kien Nguyen, Lucia Michel, Samantha Kovnat, William Woods, and Judy Hellman. The mural *Convergence* is a celebration of the Schuylkill River and surrounding environment as it winds through Central Philadelphia. The faceted facade of the iconic AT&T building, located at 25th and South Streets, just

up from the banks of the Schuylkill River, and can be seen close up from the Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk, and more distantly from across the river and beyond into West Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The angled walls cause a dynamic, visual unfolding of the nearly 7,500 square-foot mural, heightened by contrasting faces of imagery that reveal differently to the passerby depending on the vantage point. The overlapping lines, angles and curves are visual cues in the surrounding landscape: the river, railroad, trails, roads, bridges, ramps, and boardwalk that criss-cross and converge on this part of Philadelphia. The lines of the right two mural walls illuminate these intersections. The left wall's colorful interlocking, faceted forms and linear spaces that connect to the right side, have multiple meanings: they evoke reflections of light on the water; aerial maps, tectonic processes, and pathways. The Schuylkill River Trail, envisioned to connect Philadelphia with the river's headwaters in the Appalachian Mountains a hundred miles away, is currently being extended Southward to other parts of Philadelphia. All together, *Convergence* represents the connectivity of the Schuylkill River, its trails, and roads that lead to regions beyond; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, We in this Council commend Rebecca Rutstein for her continued commitment and dedication through her art to the City of Philadelphia and thank her for all of her public masterpieces enjoyed by all across our region and wish her well in all her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Rebecca Rutstein as evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.