Legislation Text

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Recognizing the Urban Affairs Coalition on the 50th Anniversary of its founding.

WHEREAS, In 1968, in the wake of the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a coalition of Philadelphia's leaders, led by the late, great Charles "Charlie" W. Bowser, gathered in the PSFS Building at 12th & Market; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of several hours, the leaders reached a consensus - that the best way to prevent the unrest that had already spilled over into violence and rioting in dozens of American cities from happening in Philadelphia was to make a significant investment in the community; and

WHEREAS, Two days later, the leaders had combined commitments of over $1 million, and the historic partnership between business, government, and community, which would later become the Philadelphia Urban Coalition, "was created to fight inner-city and other social inequities by bringing together the various public and private sectors in our City…not so much a new organization as a new structure through which existing organizations and existing leadership can coordinate and expand their efforts"; and

WHEREAS, The Urban Coalition began its work in 1969, under the leadership of Charlie Bowser, and succeeded by John Bowser, who oversaw many of the initiatives that UAC is best known for today, including the first citywide summer jobs program for teens; and

WHEREAS, During the 1980s, the Coalition expanded through strong alliances with the Urban Affairs Partnership, which gave rise to their Economic Development Projects, which brought business and employment development to minorities, women, and historically underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, In 1991, under the leadership of Ernest Jones and Dr. Bernard E. Anderson, the Urban Affairs Partnership and the Philadelphia Urban Coalition merged to create the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition, multiplying its economic impact by a magnitude of 10 - from $2 million to $20 million annually, and impacting the growth of newer diverse organizations; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, the organization underwent a rebranding, becoming the Urban Affairs Coalition ("UAC"), and since then, it has doubled in size, its staff of over 450 working with more than 80 programs and managing over $40 million in annual social impact; and

WHEREAS, Today, under the 20-year leadership of Sharmain Matlock-Turner - the first woman to lead the Coalition - as UAC turns 50 and surpasses $1 billion in cumulative social impact, it is a well-known destination for nonprofits seeking fiscal sponsorship and access to infrastructure, networks, and funding which had previously been denied to them, and for funders looking to support and invest in marginalized communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does recognize the Urban Affairs Coalition on the 50th Anniversary of its founding.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to representatives of the Urban Affairs Coalition, evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.

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