

## Legislation Text

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Honoring and recognizing the life and legacy of Malik Aziz for his towering achievements as a civic leader, trailblazer, and champion for returning citizens in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The late Malik Aziz, a tireless fighter for the disadvantaged and disenfranchised, dedicated his life to causes of criminal justice reform, anti-violence, and social justice; and

WHEREAS, A native of Roxborough, Aziz became the Executive Director of the City's Office of Reentry under Mayor John Street in 2000; and

WHEREAS, Aziz himself was incarcerated in the 1990s and during that time co-founded Ex-Offenders Inc., a program for inmates devoted to self-transformation; and

WHEREAS, The program assembled formerly incarcerated citizens to travel across Philadelphia to encourage younger generations to stay on the right path and off the streets; and

WHEREAS, As Executive Director of the Office of Reentry, Aziz was a plaintiff in the successful federal lawsuit to restore voting rights for those that had been previously convicted of a felony in the state of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, The court ruling made Pennsylvania one of only 17 states to grant former felons the right to vote upon the completion of their sentence; and

WHEREAS, In 2002, Aziz founded the grassroots organization, Men United for a Better Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The organization worked to reduce violence and crime in the City's most underserved neighborhoods and connect communities with job and mentorship opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Aziz was also involved in the National Exhodus Council where he worked on reentry reforms with civic leaders from cities across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Aziz highlighted the work of his fellow community leaders with the "Guiding Light in the Community" award in honor of his mentor, former Philadelphia Congressman Lucien Blackwell; and

WHEREAS, Aziz's trailblazing work on behalf of returning citizens and underserved communities will inspire community leaders in Philadelphia for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHIALDELPHIA, That it hereby honors and recognizes the life and legacy of Malik Aziz for his towering achievements as a civic leader, trailblazer, and champion for returning citizens in Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Malik Aziz,

further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.