Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring the Philadelphia City Commissioners and the hard-working members of their staff for their around the clock work during the 2020 General Election, and for ensuring that every vote cast in Philadelphia was counted.

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia City Commissioners are a three-member bipartisan board of elected officials in charge of elections and voter registration for the City of Philadelphia. The Commissioners set and enforce department policies to administer voter registration and conduct elections in accordance with federal and state voter registration and election laws. Philadelphia's current City Commissioners are Lisa Deeley (D), Al Schmidt (R) and Omar Sabir (D); and

WHEREAS, Due to the challenges presented with in-person voting during a pandemic, an overwhelming number of Philadelphians elected to vote by mail. The Philadelphia City Commissioners took various steps to ensure that the mail-in ballot process went smoothly, including setting up 17 "early voting centers" for residents to apply for and obtain ballots, and also setting up 14 mail-in ballot drop boxes across the City; and

WHEREAS, By Election Day, which was held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, over 350,000 mail in ballots were cast in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania law prohibited the counting of ballots prior to polls opening at 7am on Election Day. Ballots post-marked by Nov. 3rd were required to be counted as long as they were received by the City Commissioners by Friday, Nov. 6th; and

WHEREAS, The process of ballot counting at the Philadelphia Convention Center was observed by representatives of both the Democratic and Republican parties, and also thousands of members of the public via a YouTube live stream; and

WHEREAS, The staff of the Philadelphia City Commissioners worked around-the-clock for several days to count over 350,000 ballots. In the midst of growing protests outside, legal filings, unfounded accusations of fraud and even death threats, the staff of the Philadelphia City Commissioners did not stop their work until every vote was counted; and

WHEREAS, The hard work of the Philadelphia City Commissioners and their staff allowed for
the integrity of our City's election process to be upheld and furthered the fundamental principles of democracy that originated here in Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors the Philadelphia City Commissioners and the hard-working members of their staff for their around the clock work during the 2020 General Election, and for ensuring that every vote cast in Philadelphia was counted.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Commissioner Lisa Deeley, Commissioner Al Schmidt, Commissioner Omar Sabir and the staff of their respective offices, as evidence of

the sincere appreciation and gratitude of this legislative body.

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