Legislation Text

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Commending Dr. Brenda A. Allen for being named one of the 10 most dominant historically black college leaders for 2021, and congratulating Lincoln University for earning the historic gift of $20 million from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott.

WHEREAS, Dr. Brenda A. Allen currently serves as Lincoln University's 14th President. She has been aggressively implementing a strategic plan designed to ensure Lincoln's place among great liberal arts institutions. The plan builds upon the University's strong legacy of using the liberal arts as the vehicle for producing world leaders who are globally engaged and committed to social justice. The current investments prioritize enhancing academic quality and improving operational effectiveness with projects such as revising the curriculum, increasing support for faculty teaching and scholarship, expanding co-curricular opportunities, and restructuring the administration; and

WHEREAS, Before becoming the first female president of the nation's first degree-granting institution for African American students, Dr. Allen was recognized for her academic and administrative achievement at various other institutions; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Allen's first step in her academic career was when she was inspired to study psychology during her Advanced Placement Psychology course at her Newark, New Jersey high school. Her white teacher told her that it was a "fact" that African Americans were intellectually inferior to whites. Allen, knowing this was not true, went on to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology at Lincoln University. At this historically black college, she was inspired to pursue a higher education. She earned a Master's Degree in Experimental Psychology and a Doctoral Degree in Developmental Psychology from Howard University. Her research focus was on interactions between ethnicity, education, and student achievement, particularly for African American children; and

WHEREAS, After earning her degrees, Dr. Allen served as a postdoctoral associate in the Department of Psychology at Yale University, as well as a lecturer in the Department of Psychology and African American Studies. Following Yale, Dr. Allen held several positions at Smith College, including Chair of the African American Studies Department, Assistant to the President, Director of Institutional Diversity, and Special Assistant to the Provost. Afterwards, Dr. Allen joined Brown University as the Associate Provost and Director for Institutional Diversity. She also raised $15 million to support diversity goals, which included leading the effort to increase the number of women and minority faculty members to 36% and 34% respectively; and

WHEREAS, Directly before becoming President of Lincoln University, Dr. Allen served as Provost and Vice chancellor for Academic Affairs at Winston Salem State University (WSSU). Dr. Allen departed WSSU with a legacy of achievement. Her many accomplishments included leading the revision of the curriculum, overseeing the establishment of WSSU's first two doctoral programs, expanding undergraduate research funding, restructuring academic support to strengthen advising, strengthening standards for tenure and promotion, and helping raise more than $10 million for capital projects, scholarships, and other student support; and

WHEREAS, Since becoming President of Lincoln University in 2017, Dr. Allen has led many groundbreaking

and forward thinking initiatives. Building on the university's legacy of producing world leaders through liberal arts and one of the top 20 HBCUs, Dr. Allen headed the creation and implementation of the comprehensive strategic plan, *Reimagining the Legacy: Learn. Liberate. Lead.* While guiding the university through the global pandemic, she continues to strengthen academic quality, operational effectiveness, faculty teaching and scholarship, co-curricular opportunities, as well as restoring historic campus structures; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, Dr. Allen has expanded offerings at Lincoln's School for Adult and Continuing Education by creating an online summer program providing general education and soft skills coursework that prepare adult community members to be competitive in the modern job market. Dr. Allen has been laser focused on the liberal arts and the commitment to ensuring that Lincoln assists those students who might otherwise not be able to matriculate due to financial challenges; and

WHEREAS, Because of Dr. Allen's impressive achievements in just three years at Lincoln University, the HBCU Campaign Fund named Dr. Allen one of the 10 most dominant historically black college leaders for 2021. The campaign fund recognizes presidents for their prominent and influential leadership and ability to effectively move institutions forward. Demetrius Johnson Jr., founder, president, and CEO of the campaign fund, said, "Dr. Allen has provided numerous years of strategic vision, exceptional leadership, tireless devotion, and outstanding commitment to the Lincoln University community as its 14th President. She continues to robustly advance the mission of the nation's first degree-granting HBCU"; and

WHEREAS, In addition to winning this prodigious award, in December 2020, philanthropist MacKenzie Scott recognized Dr. Allen's and Lincoln University's achievements with the largest donation by a single donor in the university's 167 year history. Dr. Allen will lead the university in utilizing the unrestricted $20 million gift to support student success and global engagement. Funds will be used to support the comprehensive strategic plan for student success, by investing in teaching, research, faculty development, experiential learning, and providing additional funds to the Brenda A. Allen Need-Based Scholarship Fund, which closes financial gaps for a large number of Lincoln University students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA Hereby commends Dr. Brenda A. Allen for being named one of the 10 most dominant historically black college leaders for 2021, and congratulating Lincoln University for earning the historic gift of $20 million from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Brenda A. Allen as evidence of the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.

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