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

Legislation Text

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Congratulating Bernard W. Smalley for being named President of the Board of Directors of City Trusts, making him the first Black President in the board's 151 year history.

WHEREAS, On December 16, 2020, Bernard W. Smalley, Esq., was unanimously elected as the President of the Board of Directors of City Trusts, which oversees 119 charitable trusts, including Girard College and Wills Eye Hospital. Smalley has been a member or the board since 2001, and he became the Vice President in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Smalley was raised in West Philadelphia, where he worked in his father's barbershop. There, he grew up in the presence of some of the City's greatest legal minds who frequented the barbershop, including William H. Hastie, the first African-American to serve as the Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals; Ronald Davenport, who became Dean of Duquesne University Law School; and H. Patrick Swygert, who became President of Howard University. As a child, Smalley was a witness to the civil rights movement of the 1960s in Philadelphia, where the cause to desegregate Girard College was a major focus; and

WHEREAS, These leaders, and his early experiences, ultimately inspired Smalley to study law. Smalley took over his father's business after his unexpected death, while also attending Temple University. Upon his graduation from Temple, Smalley worked as an administrator for the Court of Common Pleas while also attending Widener University Law School at night. Upon his graduation in 1980, Smalley clerked for the Hon. Stanley M. Greenberg, then began his career as a trial attorney advocating on behalf of victims of corporate or professional negligence. Representing plaintiffs in some of the City's highest profile cases, Smalley was a partner at the Anapol Schwartz law firm for nearly 30 years before eventually becoming a partner at Raynes Lawn Hehmeyer in 2016; and

WHEREAS, In his 35-year career, Smalley's combination of intellect, perceptiveness, and warmth has enabled him to bring justice to Philadelphians. Smalley, committed to giving back to the community, lends his expertise and wisdom as the Chair of Hearing Committee 1.14 for Supreme Court of PA Disciplinary Board; standing member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Evidence Committee; President of Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association; and board member of the Urban Affairs Coalition, the Widener University School of Law, Ellis Trust, the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, and *The Philadelphia Tribune*. He is also a member of Sigma Phi Pi fraternity (Alpha Boule) and the Philadelphia chapter of the NAACP. Further, he often holds lectures on trial techniques before national, state, and local trial lawyer and bar associations; and

WHEREAS, His peers recognize his skill and ethics, granting him many honors including: fellowship in the prestigious International Academy of Trial Lawyers and the American College of Trial Lawyers; being named one of Philadelphia's Super Lawyers every year since 2004; being selected by peers as a Top 100 lawyer in Pennsylvania; being named by *The Philadelphia Tribune* as Most Influential; and receiving the Justice Musmanno Award, the President's Award from the Barrister's Association of Philadelphia, the Soaring Eagle Award from the Minority Caucus of American Association of Justice, the Pursuit of Justice Award from the Bar Association, the Justice Thurgood Marshall Award of Excellence, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from *Philadelphia Legal Intelligencer*; and

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WHEREAS, In his new role as President of the Board of Directors of City Trusts, Smalley will guide Girard College's trust and continue his stewardship of the organization. Smalley has been a mentor and role model for students, teaching them how to capitalize on the many opportunities they enjoy at the school - opportunities that previously were denied to African-Americans until the College was desegregated in 1968; and

WHEREAS, Beyond supporting student success at Girard College, Smalley's new role will uniquely position him to change lives for the better, and expand the Board's ability to serve people from all walks of life in Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby congratulate Bernard W. Smalley for being named president of the Board of Directors of City Trusts, making him the first Black President in the board's 151 year history.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Bernard Smalley as evidence of the sincere admiration of this legislative body.

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