

## Legislation Text

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Recognizing Cohen Thompson, founder of Skate University, for his outstanding contributions and ongoing service to disadvantaged youth in his native West Philadelphia community.

WHEREAS, Cohen Thompson founded Skate University in 2009 with an ambitious vision of uplifting at-risk children and youth in his community through roller-skating; and

WHEREAS, Thompson inherited a passion for skating from his mother and uncles - Craig and Skinny - who carried on the family tradition dating back to his great-grandmother; and

WHEREAS, Thompson, a native of West Philadelphia, credits skating with keeping him off the streets and sought to provide young people in his community with the same outlet; and

WHEREAS, Without any financial backing or outside support, Thompson launched the non-profit organization Skate University to make his vision a reality; and

WHEREAS, Thompson purchased dozens of roller-skates at his own expense and began organizing Skate University lessons for children and young adults free-of-charge; and

WHEREAS, Skate University, according to its organizational mission, seeks to not only equip kids with the ability to skate, but also teach valuable life skills including teamwork, self-confidence, and means to maintain both physical and mental wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, The project has consistently grown through the years, and Thompson recently worked to clean up the Granahan playground in West Philadelphia to use for skating lessons; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the potential of the project, Thompson began receiving outside investment and City support to transform the space into a bonafide skatepark and home of Skate University events and lessons; and

WHEREAS, Thompson also uses the space to hosts barbeques and community events which bring neighbors together and combat crime and violence; and

WHEREAS, In addition to giving back to his community and uplifting young people in Philadelphia, Thompson has been serving the public at-large on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Thompson, a surgical first assistant, went viral during the early months of the pandemic when he posted a video showing off his skating skills outside MetLife Stadium while donning his blue medical scrubs; and

WHEREAS, Thompson traveled to serve in the New York metropolitan area after his local practice in Philadelphia closed down while halting elective surgeries, and he wanted to spread a message of positivity to those struggling; and

WHEREAS, Thompson's moves landed him on the Kelly Clarkson Show, Access Hollywood, Entertainment Tonight, and local news channels across the country; and

WHEREAS, Thompson's genuine ambition, drive, and love for people is an inspiration to all, and community leaders like him make an inestimable difference in the lives of so many; and

WHEREAS, What began as a small, grassroots project to share Thompson's love for skating with his community has now blossomed into a real change agent and outlet for so young people; and

WHEREAS, As a City, we must continue to recognize and rally around leaders like Thompson, and ensure they have the resources and support necessary to further their work and continue lifting up those in need; and

WHEREAS, Cohen Thompson is a true role model and reminder to all that change starts from the ground up, and we all can play a role in making our communities stronger, safer, and more prosperous; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes Cohen Thompson, founder of Skate University, for his outstanding contributions and ongoing service to disadvantaged youth in his native West Philadelphia community.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Cohen Thompson, further evidencing the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.