

## Legislation Text

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Honoring and recognizing the work and contributions of community activist Jamal Johnson for his tireless advocacy against gun violence in the City of Philadelphia, and across the nation.

WHEREAS, Jamal Johnson was born on March 10, 1957 and raised in North Philadelphia. He is a product of Philadelphia public schools, and a graduate of Edison High School; and

WHEREAS, As a teenager, Johnson lived at the House of Umoja, a place that changed his life and instilled in him a sense of responsibility to his community, and provided him with conflict mediation skills that he would use throughout his decades of activism; and

WHEREAS, Johnson began his long career of anti-violence activism at the House of Umoja, acting as a conflict mediator and facilitating peace agreements between rival gangs in hopes to decrease homicides in the community; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, Johnson joined the United States Marine Corps, a decision which he credited with giving him a sense of determination that allowed to truly commit to the causes he believed in, regardless of what was going on around him; and

WHEREAS, Johnson has continued to demonstrate this tireless commitment to anti-violence causes for decades. On January 18, 2021, Johnson began a one-man hunger strike outside of City Hall, demanding that City leaders begin to address gun violence in the City as a public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, Johnson's hunger strike would last for 26 days, during which Johnson demanded that Mayor James Kenney respond to Resolution 200447, which was adopted in City Council September 2020. The resolution urged Mayor Jim Kenney to declare gun violence a public health crisis, which would result in a multi-agency approach that drew on additional government resources, similar to the Mayor's response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Johnson was able to meet with Mayor Kenney during the hunger strike, and the Mayor committed to responding to the resolution, and acting to reduce increased instances of gun violence throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, Johnson's activism extends far beyond the boundaries of Philadelphia. In 2017, Johnson founded the Stop Killing Us March, an annual anti-violence event during which he walks from Philadelphia to Washington D.C. to call for an end to gun violence and police brutality nationwide; and

WHEREAS, Johnson's anti-violence activism also extends into communities experiencing the highest levels of violence. Every evening from January 29, 2021 to January 31, 2021, Johnson joined community activist Rosalind Picardo in her annual "Campout for Peace" event, sleeping in tents in frigid temperatures to bring attention to worsening gun violence in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Jamal Johnson has devoted his life to anti-violence activism, and continues to tirelessly fight for an end to gun violence and police brutality across the City, and the United States at-large, and his work will continue to serve as an example of unwavering commitment for future generations of activists; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby honors and recognizes community activist Jamal Johnson for his tireless advocacy against gun violence in the City of Philadelphia, and across the nation.

FURTHER RESOLVED, Than an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Jamal Johnson, further evidencing the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.