



Legislation Text

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Honoring and recognizing the 200th Anniversary of the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman.

WHEREAS, Araminta "Minty" Ross was born into slavery 200 years ago in Dorchester County, Maryland, daughter of mother Harriet "Rit" Green, enslaved by Edward Brodess, and father Ben Ross, enslaved and later emancipated by Anthony Thompson; and

WHEREAS, Minty was the fifth of nine children. Her three older sisters had been sold to out-of-state buyers and the fear and injustice of this permanent fracturing of her family made her more determined to fight slavery and guide her family and many others on the journey to freedom; and

WHEREAS, The name Tubman was through marriage, the name Harriet came from her mother who was of West African descent, from Ghana. From 1844 onward, she became Harriet Tubman but was later known as the Moses of her people; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman liberated herself in 1849 when she crossed the Pennsylvania line and found a thriving free Black community in Philadelphia, a city of reformers, abolitionists and suffragists ready to embrace her; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman with the help of William Still, Lucretia Mott, Stephen Smith, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony and many others became one of the most significant "conductors" on the Underground Railroad and once remarked: "I can say what most conductors can't say - I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger"; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman helped organize the assault on Harpers Ferry and was called "General" by John Brown. And when the Civil War soon afterwards broke, she became a nurse, cook, scout, and spy for the northern army, and was the first woman to lead an armed assault, freeing 700 slaves in the Combahee River raid in South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman fought tirelessly for the freedom of enslaved African Americans, and after the Civil War for the equal rights of all women, and for the humanity and rights of the elderly. As a prominent Civil Rights leader, she was deeply motivated by her faith and love of community; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman's legacy is intertwined with the history of Philadelphia, and the City and arts and culture community has responded in kind with a citywide *Celebration of Harriet Tubman* which ran from January 11 to March 31, 2022 inspired by her heroic life; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors and recognizes Harriet Tubman's 200th birthday this March, in hopes that future generations to come can be inspired to seek their own North Star, and thereby further honor her memory and her incredible legacy of heroism, resilience, hope, and activism.

