Legislation Text

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Honoring Patrick Eiding for twenty years of service as President of the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO, and recognizing his civic leadership and manifold accomplishments fighting for working families, building the power of Philadelphia workers, and winning labor rights and policies that meaningfully improve the lives of Philadelphians.

WHEREAS, Patrick J. Eiding is a lifelong Philadelphian who grew up in the Kensington neighborhood of the city, and served his country in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, Eiding began his nearly sixty-year career within the labor movement with the Insulators and Asbestos Workers Local 14 in 1963. From beginning as an apprentice, he rose through the union's ranks, ultimately serving as the local's Business Manager and Financial Secretary for over twenty-five years. Eiding has also held the position of Secretary Treasurer of the Philadelphia Building Trades and Construction Council since 1980, and sits on the Executive Council of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO, and the State and Local Advisory Committee and General Board of the National AFL-CIO; and

WHEREAS, Eiding was first elected President of the Philadelphia Council of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in January 2002, and would go on to serve seven terms. He now oversees a coalition of 110 affiliated unions representing some 200,000 unionized workers - the largest affiliation in the City; and

WHEREAS, Under Eiding's tenure, the AFL-CIO has flourished, and grown significantly in its stature and influence. By building strength through solidarity across a diverse membership, Eiding ensured that Philadelphia's labor unions have thrived during a period when organized labor nationwide has faced significant challenges and corporate-funded legal and political attacks; and

WHEREAS, Eiding is an ardent and effective advocate for improving conditions for Philadelphia's workers, and has championed the broad expansion of workers' rights through municipal policy, culminating in the appointment of the first-ever Deputy Mayor for Labor and the establishment of a permanent Office of Labor to guide policy in support of the interest of working Philadelphians and ensure robust enforcement of labor rights; and

WHEREAS, Understanding that the fortunes of all workers are tied together, Eiding has further been instrumental in using the power of organized labor to expand rights to those who are not yet unionized, including through passage of a domestic workers bill of rights, paid sick leave, and strong protections against wage theft. Eiding's leadership was critical in the passage of Philadelphia's Fair Workweek ordinance, which brought regular and reliable scheduling and access to critically-needed work hours to some 130,000 workers in the retail, hospitality, and restaurant industry; and

WHEREAS, Eiding has stood in strong support of the unionization wave currently sweeping the country, which is building worker power by organizing workers in new fields from Philadelphia coffee shops to art museums, and fueling a new era of labor power; and

WHEREAS, Eiding has been an important advocate for Philadelphia's public schools, helping to protect teachers and other school staff against repeated efforts to break their contracts and privatize their positions, and working to secure funding for school facilities so that students and staff have a safe and healthy environment in which to learn, including buildings that are modernized and climate-resilient, and free of toxins like asbestos, lead, and mold; and

WHEREAS, Eiding has ensured that the powerful voice of allied labor within Philadelphia is heard on critical issues impacting our city and society, uplifting the importance and connectedness of fundamental rights and freedoms, from calling out the anti-worker implications of the Supreme Court's decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* to urging action to stop the immense devastation caused by unregulated guns. When immigrant families were targeted by the Trump administration, Eiding helped lead a massive display of labor solidarity, resisting efforts to pit workers against each other based on ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, The civic landscape of Philadelphia has vastly benefitted from Eiding's time and service, as he has long held important positions on boards including Temple University, Philadelphia Works, the Urban Affairs Coalition, United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, the Committee of Seventy, Graduate Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Planning Commission. Through his leadership in these influential spaces, he both advances the interest of the city's unionized workers and helps to increase the economic and general wellbeing of all Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Eiding is widely respected and known as a trusted leader, mentor, and consensus-builder. His influence and legacy will continue long into the future through his many accomplishments and initiatives, including the establishment of a nonprofit dedicated to collaboration between labor and community organizations to improve the lives of low and middle income families, the Working Families Partnership of Philadelphia and Vicinity; and

WHEREAS, Eiding lives with his wife and close companion Elizabeth, and enjoys time with his daughters and grandchildren. He is an avid Phillies fan, and is known for his commitment to buying American-made goods. He has dedicated his time outside of work to the Asbestos Workers Mesothelioma Fund; since Eiding founded it thirty years ago, the foundation has raised over $2 million dollars in contributions to Fox Chase Cancer Center for research and a cure; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors Patrick Eiding for twenty years of service as President of the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO, and recognizes his civic leadership and manifold accomplishments fighting for working families, building the power of Philadelphia workers, and winning labor rights and policies that meaningfully improve the lives of Philadelphians.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Patrick Eiding as an expression of the admiration and respect of this legislative body.

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