Legislation Text

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Recognizing June 2023 as Black Music Month in the City of Philadelphia.

Whereas, Black Music Month has its roots in Philadelphia. On June 7, 1979, pioneering songwriter, record producer, and Philadelphia's own Kenny Gamble, one third of The Sound of Philadelphia architects, Gamble, Huff and Thom Bell, on-air radio personality and music activist Dyana Williams, and Cleveland radio DJ Ed Wright with the encouragement of the Black Music Association, had President Jimmy Carter to declared June "Black Music Month, on the South Lawn of the White House. In 2000, Congress issued a resolution declaring June Black Music Month; and President Bill Clinton signed a Black Music Month proclamation. Every American President since, has also issued proclamations; and

Whereas, Philadelphia has long been known for Black music. In 1901, United Methodist preacher Charles Albert Tindley wrote the lyrics to "We Shall Overcome," and Philadelphia is where Marian Anderson, famed contralto opera singer, was born and raised; and

Whereas, Kenny Gamble, Leon Huff, and Thom Bell's The Sound of Philadelphia with MFSB produced 175 gold and platinum albums, 80 number one hits, and a catalogue of more than 3,000 recorded songs that are still sampled by musicians today; and

Whereas, Philadelphia's own Walk of Fame along South Broad Street, also known as the Avenue of the Arts, reveals other notable Black musicians with Philly connections, including McFadden & Whitehead, Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes, Teddy Pendergrass, Girls' High's own Jill Scott, Sister Sledge, Billy Paul, Tammi Terrell, The Delfonics, Marion Williams, Boyz II Men, Patti LaBelle, Chubby Checker, The Soul Survivors, The Trammps, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Heath Brothers, Jean Carne, Dee Dee Sharp, MFSB, Earl Young, Dexter Wansel, and McCoy Tyner; and

Whereas, The Roots Picnic, started by another Philadelphia group founded by Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson and Tariq "Black Thought" Trotter, The Roots Picnic, is held in June every year to further commemorate and celebrate Black Music Month and the Philadelphia musicians who left their mark on the country; and

Whereas, notable Black Philadelphia artists such as Meek Mill, Tierra Whack, Musiq Soulchild, Freeway, Beanie Sigel, Santigold, Bri Steves, Laurin Talese, Derrick Hodge, James Poyser, Dre & Vidal, Keith Pelzer, Three Times Dope, Robert Waller, Walter Griggs, Duerwood Beale, Lady Alma, Russell Thompkins Jr., Carol Riddick, Donn T, Suzann Christine, Kindred the Family Soul, Terry Jones, Helen Bruner, Vikter Duplaix, King Britt, Rated Art, Marcus John Bryant, Princess Idia Gamble, Natalie Imani, The Three Degrees, Kurupt, Stanley Clarke, Bobby Eli, Vinnie Barrett, Christian McBride, Bill Jolly, Gerald Veasley, Lil Uzi Vert, Chubby Checker, Treena Ferebee, Jeff Bradshaw, Jahlil Beats, Eve, DJ Jazzy Jeff, Will Smith, Schoolly D, Res, Stevie McKie, Adam Blackstone, Go Go Morrow, John "Lil John" Roberts, Eugene "ManMan" Roberts, DJ Aktive, DJ Diamond Kuts, Friday, Armani White, Pink Sweat$, Lady B, The Delfonics, The Intruders, Blue Magic, The Stylistics, Ted Wizard Mills, remembering Lee Andrews, Mtume, Grover Washington Jr., Philly Joe Jones, Isa Gamble, Lisa "Left Eye" Lopez, PnB Rock, Billie Holiday and many more who shined and carry on the legacy of great Black Philadelphian creatives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby recognize June 2023 as Black Music Month in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copies of this Resolution be presented to Black Music Month co-founders and Philadelphia residents, Kenny Gamble and Dyana Williams, further evidencing the sincere respect of this Legislative body.