File #: 251075, **Version:** 0

Congratulating the Avenging The Ancestors Coalition and its founder Michael Coard, Esq. on the 15th Anniversary of the grand opening of the Slavery Memorial at the President's House at Sixth and Market Streets.

WHEREAS, The President's House at Sixth and Market Streets marks the location where the first Presidents, George Washington and John Adams, conducted executive business of the United States in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The site is also where nine African American men and women were enslaved by Washington, including Ona Judge, Moll, Austin, Hercules, Richmond, Giles, Paris, Christopher Sheels, and Joe. For decades, the history of slavery at the nation's founding went unacknowledged, until community advocates fought to illuminate the truth of the site and the lives of the enslaved; and

WHEREAS, Attorney and advocate Michael Coard, Esq. founded The Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC), leading a multi-year campaign demanding the National Park Service and Independence National Historic Park fully recognize the individuals connected to the President's House Site; and

WHEREAS, Under Coard's leadership, ATAC collaborated with historians and community organizers and applied legal pressures, resulting in the Slavery Memorial at the President's House opening in 2010 as a groundbreaking site that recognizes the history of early presidency and the presence of slavery in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, For the last fifteen years the memorial has served as a public education space, informing visitors about the complicated legacy of the early United States and the resilience of those enslaved, including those who resisted and sought freedom like Ona Judge and Hercules of the President's House; and

WHEREAS, In 2025, the memorial has come under threat following President Donald Trump's directive to review the historical exhibits of the National Park Service, specifically targeting the Slavery Memorial for possible removal on the grounds that they "disparage" American history; and

WHEREAS, Any attempt to alter or censor the memorial threatens the historical integrity of the site, undermines public understanding of our complete past, and erases the experiences of the enslaved individuals whom the memorial honors; and

WHEREAS, Coard and the ATAC continue to mobilize Philadelphians, scholars, civic leaders, and community members across the City to resist historical whitewashing and ensure that the memorial remains intact and factual; and

WHEREAS, The preservation of the memorial is critical for both Philadelphia's historical landscape and the country's broader understanding of its founding; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby congratulates the Avenging The Ancestors Coalition and its founder Michael Coard, Esq. on the 15th anniversary of the opening of the

Slavery Memorial at the President’s House at Sixth and Market Streets.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to the Avenging The Ancestors Coalition as an expression of the sincere admiration and appreciation of this legislative body.