Legislation Text

File #: 260486, **Version:** 0

Recognizing May 2026 as World Heritage Month in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Independence Hall has stood at 6th and Chestnut since 1753, and in 1979 UNESCO put it on the World Heritage List with the Pyramids, the Taj Mahal, and Machu Picchu, where it is still the only Pennsylvania entry; and

WHEREAS, In November 2015, Philadelphia became the first World Heritage City in the United States, a designation that puts the City in company with Cairo, Kyoto, Quebec, and Edinburgh; and

WHEREAS, World Heritage Month 2026 falls in the run-up to July 4, 2026, the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in the same building that earned Philadelphia its World Heritage status, and the City is preparing to host millions of visitors for the semi quincentennial through the Philadelphia250 commission and partners across the region; and

WHEREAS, The Global Philadelphia Association did the work to land that designation, and has grown World Heritage Day into World Heritage Week, and now World Heritage Month, pulling together programming with museums, universities, neighborhood groups, and consulates across the region; and

WHEREAS, May 18 is International Museum Day, and World Heritage Month gives residents, students, and visitors a sustained occasion to visit the museums, historic sites, archives, and neighborhoods that make Philadelphia a working record of American and global history; and

WHEREAS, That record begins with the Lenape, whose homeland this is, and runs through the African American Philadelphians who built Mother Bethel and the institutions of free Black life in the early Republic, the immigrant communities whose churches, mosques, temples, and storefronts mark every corner of the city, and the workers, organizers, and artists still adding to the story; and

WHEREAS, History doesn't keep itself, and Philadelphians owe the people who do that work, including the rangers at Independence National Historical Park, the curators and educators at the African American Museum in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Penn Museum, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Library Company, the Mütter Museum, and the volunteers at neighborhood historical societies who run archives out of basements and church annexes on whatever they can scrape together; and

WHEREAS, Heritage tourism is also a real piece of the local economy, filling restaurants and hotels and keeping cultural workers employed, and a city that forgets that loses more than the buildings; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Recognizes May 2026 as World Heritage Month in the City of Philadelphia.