

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 96 Session of
2009

INTRODUCED BY JOHNSON, BELFANTI, BISHOP, BRENNAN, CALTAGIRONE,
COHEN, CONKLIN, D. COSTA, DALEY, DePASQUALE, DiGIROLAMO,
DONATUCCI, FRANKEL, GEIST, GEORGE, GINGRICH, GOODMAN,
GRUCELA, HELM, HENNESSEY, KORTZ, KOTIK, MAHONEY, MAJOR, MANN,
McCALL, MILLARD, MURPHY, MURT, O'NEILL, PALLONE, PARKER,
PASHINSKI, PAYNE, PAYTON, ROSS, SAINATO, SANTARSIERO,
SCAVELLO, SIPTROTH, K. SMITH, SONNEY, SWANGER, VULAKOVICH,
WATERS, WHEATLEY AND YOUNGBLOOD, MARCH 17, 2009

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, MARCH
17, 2009

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing, during the observation of "Women's History Month"
2 in March 2009, the contributions of Dorothy Allen, Josephine
3 Blow, Lois A. Fernandez, Minnie Moore-Johnson, Lillian Ray,
4 Betty B. Richardson Smoot and Emma Wilson.

5 WHEREAS, March 2009 is "Women's History Month," and
6 Pennsylvania has many women who have contributed greatly to the
7 progress and tradition of this Commonwealth; and

8 WHEREAS, While many of these women have already received wide
9 recognition for their contributions, there are countless others
10 who are less well known but are nonetheless woven into the
11 fabric of our history; and

12 WHEREAS, Seven women of this Commonwealth who deserve
13 acclamation during "Women's History Month" have served the City
14 of Philadelphia for decades; and

15 WHEREAS, Dorothy Allen began the Barrett Educational

1 Community Center in 1976 to offer a safe haven for children and
2 youth and to provide resources, food and services to
3 neighborhood adults, personally financing the center and
4 continuing to work during acute illnesses and through personal
5 tribulation; and

6 WHEREAS, Ms. Allen recently turned over the center's
7 operation to her granddaughter, Tiphonie White, who now serves
8 as its executive director; and

9 WHEREAS, Josephine Blow has served as Chester Avenue Business
10 Association's president for the past 20 years, is a
11 committeeperson of the 51st Ward, a board member of the African
12 Cultural Alliance of North America and serves on planning
13 committees for Southwest Pride Day, Thomas Avenue Town Watch
14 National Night Out Celebration and Garden Homes; and

15 WHEREAS, Ms. Blow belongs to the Southwest EPIC Stakeholders
16 and its Safe Corridor program, the 12th Police District Advisory
17 Council, the South West Action Coalition, Project NEAT and
18 Intelligent Sisters Improving Selves (ISIS), is an elected
19 member of the board of the Southwest CDC Neighborhood Advisory
20 Committee and has been involved in the planning and
21 revitalization of the Chester Avenue business corridor; and

22 WHEREAS, Lois A. Fernandez holds a master's degree in urban
23 planning from Antioch College and worked for the City of
24 Philadelphia from 1970 to 1988, fighting gang violence, engaging
25 in parent counseling and supervising children in foster care, as
26 well as innovating social programs in the Philadelphia School
27 District; and

28 WHEREAS, Ms. Fernandez has played a significant role in
29 preserving and perpetuating African culture since 1972, which
30 was highlighted through her work on the host committee of the

1 Corporate Council of Africa's 2001 meeting in Philadelphia; she
2 founded ODUNDE, Inc., initiated the ODUNDE Festival in
3 Philadelphia in 1975 to celebrate African culture and has served
4 as ODUNDE, Inc.'s president for the past 30 years; and

5 WHEREAS, Ms. Fernandez has received numerous awards for her
6 vision and service, and, in 1967, she sued in Federal Court,
7 successfully, for the removal of the term "illegitimate" from
8 the birth certificates of babies of single mothers; and

9 WHEREAS, Minnie Moore-Johnson is the founder and chief
10 executive officer of Concerned Parents, Inc., a nonprofit
11 organization that provides services to citizens in Philadelphia
12 who are less fortunate, elderly, homeless, or ex-offenders; the
13 organization provides educational support, food, clothing,
14 affordable furniture and appliances and links clients with
15 service agencies to find additional resources and employment;
16 and she personally has increased the annual Concerned Parents,
17 Inc., senior citizens Thanksgiving dinner from 15 meals served
18 in 1968 to 25,000 meals served in 1988; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Moore-Johnson created the Job Development
20 program at Temple University, which offers courses on ex-
21 offender job training, as well as training in ex-offender social
22 work and job development, and has received numerous accolades,
23 honors and awards for her many contributions; and

24 WHEREAS, Betty B. Richardson Smoot has run a successful real
25 estate transactions and tax preparation office since 1968,
26 serving the people of west Philadelphia as a real estate
27 salesperson since 1953; and

28 WHEREAS, Ms. Smoot served for many years as executive
29 director of the Mt. Zion Unity Development Corporation, was a
30 founding member of the Schuylkill Women's Coalition, has been

1 very active at her church for more than 70 years and currently
2 serves as a member of the Business and Professional Women's
3 Ministry and the church choir, and is the recipient of numerous
4 awards for her community and governmental service; and

5 WHEREAS, In 2001, after serving as deputy to three drug
6 czars, Lillian Ray was appointed the first African-American
7 female drug czar of the City of Philadelphia, capping an
8 industrious career in law enforcement and community organization
9 combating drug violence and crime through efforts such as
10 Stinger Square Community Services, interracial sports leagues,
11 computer training centers, literacy classes, food pantries,
12 enrichment workshops and the creation of the Peace Wall Mural in
13 the heart of the racially torn Graysferry section of the city;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The mother of nine children, Ms. Ray has received
16 numerous awards and honors and serves on many boards, most
17 notably the Interdisciplinary Youth Fatality Task Force,
18 Pennsylvania Justice Fellowship Task Force and Philadelphia
19 Health Management Corporation Advisory Board; and

20 WHEREAS, For many years, Emma Wilson was the unwavering force
21 and youth advocate at Dixon House, serving as director of Camp
22 Unami, a residential summer camp for city children in rural
23 Pennsylvania; supervising a program to provide summer jobs for
24 youth; making Dixon House available for group dances and
25 gatherings; and organizing trips for young people in order to
26 expand their horizons; and

27 WHEREAS, Ms. Wilson's commitment to youth and family safety
28 led to her involvement with the Safe Corridor Project and
29 despite recent personal health concerns, Ms. Wilson remains
30 active in the community; and

1 WHEREAS, The commitment to social and community involvement
2 exemplified by these seven women is worthy of celebration and
3 praise; therefore be it

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize, during
5 the observation of "Women's History Month" in March 2009, the
6 contributions of Dorothy Allen, Josephine Blow, Lois A.
7 Fernandez, Minnie Moore-Johnson, Lillian Ray, Betty B.
8 Richardson Smoot and Emma Wilson.