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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All House Members

**FROM:** The Honorable Vanessa Lowery Brown 

**DATE:** September 22, 2011

**RE:** Co-Sponsorship of Legislation – Resolution Honoring Dr. Constance E. Clayton

In the near future, I plan to introduce a resolution honoring the numerous educational achievements of Dr. Constance Clayton, the first African American and the first woman superintendent of the Philadelphia City School District. It is my sincere hope you will join me in this effort.

Born in 1937 in Philadelphia, Dr. Constance Clayton was the only child of Levi Clayton, a plumber, and Willabell Harris Clayton, a social worker. At the young age of two, Dr. Clayton's parents divorced, leaving her to be raised by her mother and grandmother. She subsequently attended Paul Lawrence Dunbar Elementary School and the Philadelphia High School for Girls. Dr. Clayton would go on to earn her B.S. and M.Ed. degrees from Temple University and her Ed.D in Educational Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania, where she was a Rockefeller Scholar.

Dr. Clayton became superintendent of the Philadelphia City School District in 1982, after serving in a variety of education related roles for nearly three decades. As superintendent, she was faced with a broad spectrum of problems including budget setbacks, low test scores, declining enrollment, and a high poverty concentration throughout the district. Dr. Clayton instituted a number of programs aimed at increasing student achievement as well as making the district financially solvent. With the help of local businesses, programs such as the Homeless Student Initiative and the Take Stock in Education series flourished. Under her leadership, America 2000 was instituted – which was an ambitious plan for urban schools throughout the United States to implement radical changes by the year 2000. Dr. Clayton retired from her role as superintendent in 1993, leaving a legacy of successful programs and fiscal discipline in an era of seemingly unending problems.

In light of her success in the field of education, Dr. Clayton has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including several honorary doctorates. Dr. Clayton's advocacy on behalf of education continues to this day. If you would like to co-sponsor this important resolution, please contact Takesha Latham at 717-783-3822 or [tlatham@pahouse.net](mailto:tlatham@pahouse.net).