



House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

## Memorandum

**TO:** Members of the House of Representatives

**FROM:** Representative Brendan Boyle

**DATE:** February 7, 2012

**SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship Resolution: Philadelphia's first Poet Laureate Sonia Sanchez**

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In the near future, I plan to introduce a resolution honoring Ms. Sonia Sanchez for becoming Philadelphia's first Poet Laureate.

On December 29, 2011, Mayor Michael Nutter selected Sonia Sanchez as Philadelphia's first Poet Laureate and called her the "conscience of the city." Ms. Sanchez has been a resident of Philadelphia since 1976. As the city's Poet Laureate, she is responsible for selecting and mentoring a Youth Poet Laureate, and participating in spoken word and poetry events at city sponsored events.

Sonia Sanchez is considered one of the most important writers of the Black Arts Movement. Born Wilsonia Benita Driver in 1934, Ms. Sanchez has lectured at over 500 universities and colleges in the United States and has read her poetry around the world in places such as Africa, Cuba, England, the Caribbean, Australia, Europe, Nicaragua, the People's Republic of China, Norway, and Canada. She was the first Presidential Fellow at Temple University and held the Laura Carnell Chair in English at the University. She has received numerous awards, including the Harper Lee Award, 2004, Alabama Distinguished Writer, and the National Visionary Leadership Award in 2006. Currently, Ms. Sanchez is one of 20 African-American women featured in the traveling interactive exhibition "Freedom Sisters," created by the Cincinnati Museum Center and Smithsonian Institution.

I hope you join me in honoring the life achievements of Ms. Sonia Sanchez. If you would like to co-sponsor this resolution, please contact Kristen Womelsdorf in my office at (717) 787-3055 or [KWomelsd@pahouse.net](mailto:KWomelsd@pahouse.net).