

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. **858** Session of
2010

INTRODUCED BY BISHOP, READSHAW, KORTZ, COHEN, DONATUCCI,
HENNESSEY, MILLARD, BEYER, KOTIK, GODSHALL, MAHONEY,
K. SMITH, KULA, ROEBUCK, CALTAGIRONE, GOODMAN, BRADFORD,
DALEY, D. COSTA, GRUCELA, GINGRICH, SIPTROTH, CONKLIN AND
YOUNGBLOOD, JUNE 22, 2010

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, JUNE
22, 2010

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring an award-winning documentary and commending State and
2 citywide victories for Philadelphia students inspired by and
3 based on the civil rights website, wdashistory.org.

4 WHEREAS, A trio of 10th grade students, Laura Garcia,
5 Catherine Breiner and Samuel Kopansky, of Philadelphia's J.R.
6 Masterman High School, were inspired by the civil rights history
7 and rare photographs presented in the virtual web museum,
8 wdashistory.org; and

9 WHEREAS, This inspiration compelled them to write, produce
10 and direct the exemplary history documentary, "WDAS:
11 Broadcasting a Frequency of Change"; and

12 WHEREAS, This documentary portrays the research and writings
13 of WDAS, civil rights historian and author, Wynne Alexander, who
14 curates and writes for wdashistory.org; and

15 WHEREAS, Alexander helped the students' understanding of
16 their intricate sociopolitical histories covered, the nuances

1 and comparisons regarding radio and television's standards and
2 practices over a 60-year period and WDAS Radio's crucial
3 contributions to the United States Civil Rights Movement and
4 integration of the entertainment industry; and

5 WHEREAS, These students then demonstrated an extraordinary
6 grasp of this history and transformed their interest and
7 knowledge into a compelling documentary; and

8 WHEREAS, Their teacher, Amy Cohen, instilled in them a great
9 respect and appreciation of African-American history and was
10 extremely helpful with her overall guidance, organizing the
11 documentary and suggesting sources and interview subjects; and

12 WHEREAS, The students not only learned the historical
13 information but also mastered the technical skills of film
14 storytelling, film editing, direction, production and narration;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, They did this working as a team, with all the poise
17 and analytical skills of much older, seasoned professionals; and

18 WHEREAS, On March 4, 2010, their documentary went on to win
19 first place in the citywide National History Day in
20 Philadelphia, 2010 Contest for Best Group Documentary-Senior
21 Division; and

22 WHEREAS, This victory is even more impressive given the other
23 competitors were often older and more experienced student
24 filmmakers; and

25 WHEREAS, With film in hand, on May 12, 2010, the trio then
26 traveled to Lancaster County to compete and defend their work in
27 the Statewide National History Day-Pennsylvania, 2010 Contest
28 finals held at Millersville University; and

29 WHEREAS, They were victorious there too, winning the top
30 prize, Statewide, for a "Group Documentary-Senior Division" on

1 May 13, 2010; and

2 WHEREAS, Just like WDAS Radio itself, these first-time
3 filmmakers overcame very difficult opposition from more
4 established competitors and, undaunted, they rose to the top
5 award-winning position both State and citywide; and

6 WHEREAS, Through their great work, Breiner, Garcia and
7 Kopansky bring honor to the Philadelphia School System; and

8 WHEREAS, Through their film, more light is being cast on the
9 groundbreaking history of WDAS Radio's pioneering founders Bob
10 Klein and Max M. Leon; and

11 WHEREAS, Their revolutionary social and broadcasting
12 innovations give the City of Philadelphia a leadership position
13 in the cultural and civil rights history of our country; and

14 WHEREAS, This will now be seen at the national level as the
15 film goes on to compete for the top prize in the entire United
16 States, facing competition from across the country, United
17 States' territories and parts of Europe and Asia; and

18 WHEREAS, The abilities of Breiner, Garcia and Kopansky to
19 embrace this history and then share the profound impact this
20 extraordinary radio station had on our society is a great gift
21 to us all; and

22 WHEREAS, Just like WDAS itself, these students are a
23 multicultural team promoting the enlightened stance that
24 appreciates and embraces all cultures, and their documentary
25 guides us to draw strength from this inspiring history so that
26 we may better address and tackle the challenges of today;
27 therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the
29 achievement of Laura Garcia, Catherine Breiner and Samuel
30 Kopansky and J.R. Masterman High School.