

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 050855)

RESOLUTION

Mourning the death and honoring the memory of David Cohen.

WHEREAS, David Cohen was ninety years old when, on October 3, 2005, God in his wisdom took him from our midst. This City, Commonwealth and Country have lost a true friend and a wonderful gentleman; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cohen hails from a family that immigrated to Philadelphia from the Ukraine at the beginning of the twentieth century. David Cohen was bright, but a terrible paperhanger, so his six older siblings decided to send him to the University of Pennsylvania at age sixteen, rather than having him work in their wallpaper business. In 1937, David Cohen graduated first in his class from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law at age twenty-three. He moved to Washington, DC to work as a lawyer in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal Rural Electrification Administration. Mr. Cohen's desire to help the "little people" and his liberal views were formed in this first job. He wanted to make government more relevant to all; and

WHEREAS, In 1943, David Cohen was drafted into the United States Army. He courageously served in New Guinea during World War II. Upon his return, he married Florence Herzog in 1946 and they lived in New York City. In 1952, the Cohens returned to the Ogontz section of Philadelphia to raise their growing family. By their example, they taught their four children the values of integrity, hard work, equality for all and a belief in public service; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cohen entered democratic politics in the city as a committeeman in the forty-ninth ward in 1952. He worked on the presidential campaign of Adlai Stevenson. In 1965, he took up the cause of racial bias in voter registrations in Mississippi and marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. In that same year, Mr. Cohen was elected ward leader in the seventeenth ward, and in 1967, he was elected councilman from the eighth district, serving the northwest section of Philadelphia. Mr. Cohen resigned his council seat for an unsuccessful bid for mayor in 1971, but he was elected back into a city council at-large seat in 1979, a position which he held until his death; and

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WHEREAS, Councilman David Cohen's principles, always strong, served him well in life and in City Council. Together with his wife, Florence, they championed the causes of senior citizens, environmentalists, and the poor. There was no issue too burdensome for Councilman Cohen, if it meant serving his constituents; and

WHEREAS, A good and true legend has left us. We, his colleagues, fondly recall the hours we spent with him and the words of wisdom he imparted. We will miss him, and we will forever remember him in our hearts and minds, and in the lasting history of our city; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby mourn the death and celebrate the life of the honorable David Cohen. To his wife, Florence, his children, Mark, Denis, Sherrie and Judy, and his grandchildren, we extend our most profound condolences.

RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Florence Cohen as evidence of the sincere respect of this legislative body.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the seventeenth of October, 2005.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Council President Verna, Councilmembers Clarke, Mariano, Rizzo, Ramos, Goode, Miller, DiCicco, Tasco, Kelly, Reynolds Brown, Krajewski, Blackwell, Nutter, Kenney and O'Neill