

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

25-118

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

October 2, 2023

To recognize, honor, and celebrate Linda Leaks for her career and legacy of organizing limited-equity housing cooperatives across the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, Linda Leaks has been a resident of the District of Columbia since 1978;

WHEREAS, for 16 years, Leaks worked for Washington Inner-City Self Help (“WISH”), a grassroots organization that existed from 1978 to 2003;

WHEREAS, Leaks started her career at WISH as a tenant organizer, then working as a cooperative development organizer and cooperative educator, and finally serving as its executive director;

WHEREAS, during her time at WISH, Linda Leaks helped to organize at least 16 limited-equity cooperatives, and was responsible for helping to create nearly 400 units of housing and home ownership opportunities for District residents;

WHEREAS, the existence of many of the District’s most prominent limited-equity cooperatives owe much to Linda Leaks’ work, including Champlain Courts Cooperative, Ella Jo Baker Intentional Cooperative Community, Florian Gardens Cooperative, God is in Control Cooperative, Harriet Tubman Cooperative, I Have a Dream Cooperative, Kenyon Street Cooperative, L Street Cooperative, Malcolm X Court Cooperative, Nehemiah Cooperative Estates, Spirit of W Street Cooperative, Voice of Madison Cooperative, Mandela Cooperative, and 1425 T Street Cooperative;

WHEREAS, one of Leaks’ most significant achievements was her assistance with the formation of Southern Homes and Gardens Cooperative on Southern Avenue, S.E., formerly Capital View Town Homes, where public housing residents had been promised ownership of their homes under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Turnkey III program, only to have to fight for those ownership rights for over 2 decades;

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WHEREAS, it is thanks to the tireless organizing efforts of people such as Linda Leaks, sometimes referred to as “the Godmother of D.C. housing cooperatives,” that the District of Columbia has the second-highest concentration of housing cooperatives in the United States;

WHEREAS, Leaks later brought the work of WISH to Johannesburg, South Africa, resulting in the creation of among first housing cooperatives in South Africa;

WHEREAS, in addition to her work organizing housing cooperatives, Linda Leaks advocated for the creation and funding of the Housing Production Trust Fund, as well as other critical tenant-centered policies such as the tenant opportunity to purchase, rent stabilization, and the creation of the District’s inclusionary zoning program;

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2023, Linda Leaks will be inducted to the “Cooperative Hall of Fame,” and will be the first Black woman inducted in the field of housing justice in the Hall of Fame’s nearly 50-year history.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Linda Leaks Day Recognition Resolution of 2023”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and celebrates Linda Leaks’ contributions to housing affordability and economic opportunity in the District of Columbia, and declares October 5, 2023 as Linda Leaks Day in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.