
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 179 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY TARTAGLIONE, STREET, SAVAL, HUGHES, KEARNEY,
HAYWOOD, CAPPELLETTI, COMITTA, FONTANA, BROWN, COLLETT, KANE,
BOSCOLA, FARRY, MARTIN, SANTARSIERO, COSTA, LAUGHLIN AND
ARGALL, OCTOBER 3, 2023

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, OCTOBER 3, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and achievements of JoAnne Epps, 13th
2 President of Temple University, and expressing heartfelt
3 condolences to her family, friends, students and colleagues.

4 WHEREAS, JoAnne Epps, 13th President of Temple University,
5 passed away on September 19, 2023, at 72 years of age; and

6 WHEREAS, President Epps was born in Cheltenham, Montgomery
7 County, on May 28, 1951, and grew up among an active Jewish
8 community and, although not Jewish, spoke Yiddish fluently,
9 symbolizing her renowned openness and appreciation of all
10 peoples and cultures; and

11 WHEREAS, A first-generation college student, President Epps
12 received her bachelor's degree in 1973 as a member of the first
13 coeducational class at Trinity College in Connecticut and
14 graduated from Yale Law School in 1976 as one of only 40 women
15 and 10 Black students to receive a law degree that year; and

16 WHEREAS, President Epps joined Temple Law School's faculty in
17 1985 after serving as an Assistant United States Attorney in

1 Philadelphia and Deputy City Attorney in Los Angeles; and

2 WHEREAS, President Epps taught, trained and inspired students
3 to become leaders for more than 30 years at Temple University as
4 both a law professor and administrator, including appointments
5 as dean of Temple Law School in 2008, executive vice president
6 and provost of Temple University in 2016 and as the 13th
7 president of Temple University on April 11, 2023; and

8 WHEREAS, President Epps was a champion for women and
9 minorities and led a long and distinguished career within the
10 legal profession, including leadership roles in the American Bar
11 Association, the National Association of Women Lawyers and the
12 American Law Institute; and

13 WHEREAS, Because of her distinguished career, President Epps
14 was awarded the 2015 Spirit of Excellence Award by the American
15 Bar Association, the 2015 M. Ashley Dickerson Award by the
16 National Association of Women Lawyers and the 2014 Justice Sonia
17 Sotomayor Diversity Award by the Philadelphia Bar Association;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, The passion and integrity of President Epps also
20 greatly impacted the City of Philadelphia through her service as
21 inaugural chair of Philadelphia's Police Oversight Board, her
22 appointment by the United States District Court to monitor the
23 city's compliance with the settlement of *Bailey v. City of*
24 *Philadelphia* in 2011, her service as board president of the
25 Defender Association of Philadelphia from 1999 to 2006 and her
26 appointment by Philadelphia Mayor John Street to serve as chair
27 of the Mayor's Task Force on Police Discipline in 2001; and

28 WHEREAS, President Epps also made significant contributions
29 across the Commonwealth, including her service as a member of
30 the Pennsylvania Judicial Independence Commission, the

1 Pennsylvania Commission for Justice Initiatives, the Advisory
2 Council for the Pennsylvania Prison Society and the Advisory
3 Board of the Public Interest Law Center; and

4 WHEREAS, President Epps became the president of the
5 Pennsylvania Women's Forum in 2013, served as a member of the
6 board of directors for the Committee of Seventy and was a member
7 of the Salvation Army of Greater Philadelphia Advisory Board;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, For the above reasons and other significant
10 contributions, Governor Tom Corbett named President Epps a
11 Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania in 2012; and

12 WHEREAS, President Epps also promoted advocacy and the rule
13 of law in a variety of international arenas by educating lawyers
14 at the United Nations' International Criminal Tribunal for
15 Rwanda in Tanzania, teaching trial advocacy to members of the
16 Japanese Bar Association in Japan and providing training to
17 Sudanese lawyers representing victims of the Darfur crisis
18 before the International Criminal Court; and

19 WHEREAS, President Epps was a devoted and loving wife to her
20 husband of nearly 40 years, L. Harrison Jay, and left a lasting
21 legacy among her family and countless friends, students and
22 colleagues; and

23 WHEREAS, The talent, kindness and integrity of President Epps
24 will continue to impact Temple University, Philadelphia and the
25 Commonwealth in her absence; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate honor the life and achievements of
27 JoAnne Epps, 13th President of Temple University, and express
28 heartfelt condolences to her family, friends, students and
29 colleagues.