



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby recognize and honor the important milestone of the Allegheny Observatory, and does hereby declare Saturday, August 25, 2012, to be "Allegheny Observatory Centennial Day" in the City of Pittsburgh.

Sponsors: Darlene M. Harris

Indexes: PROCLAMATION - MRS. HARRIS

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
8/31/2012	1	City Council	Adopted	Pass

WHEREAS, Astronomy the oldest of the sciences, is education in its purest form, for astronomy exists only because people want to know and understand the universe that surrounds them; and

WHEREAS, the **Allegheny Observatory** was founded on February 15, 1859, in the City of Allegheny, by a group of wealthy industrialists called the Allegheny Telescope Association
<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Allegheny_Telescope_Association&action=edit&redlink=1>; and

WHEREAS, in 1867 the facility was donated to the Western University of Pennsylvania
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_University_of_Pennsylvania>, today's University of Pittsburgh
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Pittsburgh>; and

WHEREAS, hired to be the first director of the **Allegheny Observatory**, Samuel Pierpont Langley
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Pierpont_Langley> used the telescope to study the sun, especially sunspots and heat from different parts of the solar spectrum; and

WHEREAS, the original observatory building was replaced by the current structure in Riverview Park, the cornerstone was laid in 1900 and completed in 1912, designed by Thorsten Billquist, the building consists of a library, lecture hall, classrooms, offices, and three domed telescope enclosures, two reserved for research and one for use by schools and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the primary instrument of the **Allegheny Observatory** is the 30 inch Thaw telescope, the third largest refractor in the US, constructed by the Brashear Company; and

WHEREAS, the second largest dome of the **Allegheny Observatory** houses the James E. Keeler Memorial Telescope, a reflecting telescope with a mirror 31 inches in diameter; and

WHEREAS, the main research at the **Allegheny Observatory** involves the detections of extra-solar planets <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extrasolar_planets> through the use of photometry, the measurement of the brightness of stars; and

WHEREAS, the core of the building houses a glass window depicting Urania <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urania>>, the Greek muse <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muse>> of astronomy, and a crypt containing the ashes of two eminent astronomers and former directors of the **Allegheny Observatory**, James Edward Keeler <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Edward_Keeler> and John Brashear <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Brashear>; and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, August 25, 2012, past and present University of Pittsburgh Department of Physics <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physics>> and Astronomy <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astronomy>> members gathered at the **Allegheny Observatory** to celebrate the building's 100th Anniversary;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby recognize and honor the important milestone of the **Allegheny Observatory**, and does hereby declare Saturday, August 25, 2012, to be “**Allegheny Observatory Centennial Day**” in the City of Pittsburgh.