



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0621-2023, **Version:** A

Res. No. 621-A

Resolution designating November 15 annually as Ol' Dirty Bastard Day in the City of New York and honoring his legacy as a founder of the legendary Wu-Tang Clan and as a unique MC.

By Council Members Ossé, Cabán, Riley, Louis, Farías, Rivera and Williams

Whereas, Russell Tyrone Jones was born on November 15, 1968, in Brooklyn and became one of Hip Hop's most unique MCs (master of ceremonies) and influential voices, known to his many fans as Ol' Dirty Bastard or ODB; and

Whereas, ODB is known for his half-sung, half-rapped style, with free-associative rhymes that have stood the test of time, or, as *Rolling Stone* magazine put it, “a like-it-raw vibe that disguised lyrical chops, a jazzy flow, and hip-hop's greatest can't-sing voice since Biz Markie”; and

Whereas, ODB became one of the founding members of the Wu-Tang Clan, the iconic rap collective primarily from Staten Island, along with his cousins Gary Grice (known to fans as GZA) and Robert Diggs (known to fans as RZA); and

Whereas, ODB boasted the loudest personality of the Wu-Tang members and was loved by his fans as a larger-than-life magnetic character, on stage and off; and

Whereas, In 1993, Wu-Tang released its landmark *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)*, ranked as 8 by *Rolling Stone* on its list of the 200 greatest Hip Hop albums; and

Whereas, In writing about Wu-Tang's debut album, *Rolling Stone* spotlighted “the free-form wit” of ODB and noted that the album was “[n]ine guys from New York's outermost boroughs, steeped in Five Percent teachings and old kung-fu movies, crammed into one smoky studio for a lyrical battle royale that would reshape rap for the next decade...and [make] an entire generation of MCs step up their lingo”; and

Whereas, In 1995, ODB released his first solo album *Return to the 36 Chambers: The Dirty Version*, produced by RZA and written, in part, by GZA; and

Whereas, *Return to the 36 Chambers: The Dirty Version* was ranked as 106 by *Rolling Stone* on its top 200 list and was nominated for a Grammy Award for best rap album; and

Whereas, ODB was later also nominated for a Grammy for best rap album for *Wu-Tang Forever* in 1997 and for best rap performance by a duo or group for “Ghetto Supastar” in 1998; and

Whereas, ODB’s long list of classics from his Wu-Tang days and his solo work includes “Shimmy Shimmy Ya,” “Brooklyn Zoo,” “Baby C’mon,” “Protect Ya Neck,” “Hip to the Hoppa,” and “Got Your Money”; and

Whereas, ODB was working on a new album when he died on November 13, 2004, in Manhattan; and

Whereas, At the funeral, RZA eulogized ODB as “a unique soul in the family,” whom “people fell in love with immediately” wherever he went; and

Whereas, It is appropriate to dedicate a day to commemorate ODB’s influence on the generations of MCs that have followed him and his fellow Wu-Tang members; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York designates November 15 annually as Ol’ Dirty Bastard Day in the City of New York and honors his legacy as a founder of the legendary Wu-Tang Clan and as a unique MC.

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11/9/2023
RHP