

The following Resolution was adopted by the Democratic National Committee at its meeting on August 25, 2018 in Chicago, IL.

Submitted by: Jason Rae, DNC Secretary/Wisconsin  
Martha Laning, Chair, Wisconsin  
Khary Penebaker, Wisconsin  
Martha Love, Wisconsin  
Janet Bewley, Wisconsin  
David Bowen, Wisconsin  
Andrew Werthmann, Wisconsin  
Mahlon Mitchell, Wisconsin  
Lottie Shackelford, At-Large/Arkansas

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***Resolution Honoring the Life and Career of Vel Phillips***

**WHEREAS**, Vel Phillips was born on February 18, 1923, in Milwaukee, WI, to Russell and Thelma Rodgers; and

**WHEREAS**, after receiving a national oratory scholarship from the Black Elks, she attended Howard University, graduating in 1946; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1951, she became the first black woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School, where she received her L.L.B. degree; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Phillips married fellow attorney W. Dale Phillips and, with him, became the first husband-wife team admitted to the federal bar in Milwaukee; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Phillips devoted her entire life to equality and civil rights, taking on a leading role of the NAACP in Wisconsin as a young professional; and

**WHEREAS**, she was elected the first woman ever to sit on Milwaukee's Common Council, and during her time on the council, advocated for fair housing, introducing the city's open-housing ordinance in 1962 and championing it until its passage in 1968; and

**WHEREAS**, she became the first African American elected to the national committee of a major political party and served with distinction, even knowing Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter on a first-name basis; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Phillips became the first female judge in Milwaukee County, the first African American to serve in Wisconsin's judiciary, and the first woman and the first African American elected as Secretary of State; and,

**WHEREAS**, even in retirement, Phillips continued to serve her community through organizations such as America's Black Holocaust Museum, the NAACP, and Wisconsin Conservatory of Music; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Phillips founded the Vel Phillips Foundation, which continues to work for justice and equality; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Phillips received such distinctions as the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Wisconsin Alumni Association and had a residence hall at the University of Wisconsin-Madison named in her honor; and,

**WHEREAS**, Vel Phillips passed away on April 17, 2018;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Democratic National Committee honors Vel Phillips's years of service to our country, the civil rights movement and the Democratic Party, and offers condolences to her family.