



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 624

Resolution designating July 8 annually as Reggie “Combat Jack” Ossé Day in the City of New York and honoring his multifaceted contributions to the Hip Hop industry as a lawyer, executive, editor, and podcaster.

By Council Members Ossé, Cabán, Riley, Louis, Rivera, Sanchez, Nurse, Hudson and Fariás

Whereas, Hip Hop lawyer, executive, editor, and podcaster Reginald (Reggie) Joseph Ossé was born on July 8, 1964, in Brooklyn and raised in the Crown Heights neighborhood; and

Whereas, After graduating from Cornell University and Georgetown University Law Center, Ossé went to work as a lawyer at Def Jam in the early days of the Hip Hop revolution, before founding his own firm with lawyer Ed Woods; and

Whereas, Ossé’s early clients included the founders of Roc-A-Fella Records, Damon Dash and JAY-Z, and other notable Hip Hop artists; and

Whereas, After leaving the law profession, Ossé worked as an executive at MTV and became managing editor of *The Source*, one of the world’s longest-running magazines about Hip Hop culture and politics; and

Whereas, Ossé’s career took a turn into writing about and, eventually in 2010, broadcasting about Hip Hop, under the name Combat Jack; and

Whereas, On *The Combat Jack Show*, Ossé was known for his ability to conduct in-depth and insightful interviews with Hip Hop legends, including his longtime friends and associates, who were not nearly so talkative with other broadcasters, as well as with filmmakers, social activists, and more; and

Whereas, *The Combat Jack Show* was described in *XXL*, a well-known Hip Hop magazine, as “effectively the beginning of big-time rap podcasts as we know them today”; and

Whereas, The success of Ossé’s show, with a fan base of hundreds of thousands, led to his co-founding

with Chris Morrow in 2013 of Loud Speakers Network, which went on to help build the careers of younger Hip Hop broadcasters; and

Whereas, According to journalist and critic Juan Vidal, who interviewed Ossé for a book about Hip Hop and fatherhood, Ossé said that family came first for him, noting that “[n]o guest, no event, no conference call, nothing...[b]eing a father comes first”; and

Whereas, Vidal wrote in *Esquire* of his final interview in 2016 with Ossé, in which Ossé concluded, “I love being a rap dad...a rap kid who grew up with the backdrop of hip-hop and rap, became a man, and now shares that experience with his children”; and

Whereas, Vidal praised Ossé for his “humility, and the energy he put into imparting knowledge to others”; and

Whereas, Ossé died on December 20, 2017, after a short and very public struggle with colon cancer; and

Whereas, It is appropriate to dedicate a day to commemorate the legacy of those individuals who helped make the Hip Hop industry the cultural, political, and economic success that it is today in New York City and around the world; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York designates July 8 annually as Reggie “Combat Jack” Ossé Day in the City of New York and honors his multifaceted contributions to the Hip Hop industry as a lawyer, executive, editor, and podcaster.

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