



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2021-777, **Version:** 1

A Resolution recognizing Charlane Oliver and Tequila Johnson, co-founders and directors of The Equity Alliance, for being named *The Tennessean's* 2020 People of the Year.

WHEREAS, on December 27, 2020, *The Tennessean* Editorial Board named The Equity Alliance co-directors Charlane Oliver and Tequila Johnson as the 2020 People of the Year; and

WHEREAS, The Equity Alliance is a Nashville nonprofit organization that works to build independent political power among the Black electorate and end voter suppression in a state with one of the lowest voter participation rates in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Charlene Oliver is a well-respected community organizer who has received numerous accolades for her work, including being named a 2019 Woman of Influence by the *Nashville Business Journal*, a member of Nashville's 2020 Power 100 list, the 2020 Luminary Award, the 2019 Nashville Young Leaders Council Leader of the Year Award, and as a member of the 2016 Nashville Black 40 Under 40; and

WHEREAS, as a trusted voice on voting rights issues, Ms. Oliver's work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Rolling Stone*, *National Journal*, Pew Charitable Trust's *Stateline*, *Huffington Post*, *the Associated Press*, *Think Progress*, NPR's *Weekend Edition*, MSNBC, and CNN; and

WHEREAS, Tequila Johnson is community organizer and strategist whose work focuses on creating equity and increasing civic engagement among Black Americans and other communities of color. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and on CNN and MSNBC; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Ms. Johnson served as the statewide manager for the Tennessee Black Voter Project, which is a statewide coalition of nearly two dozen local nonprofits that submitted 91,000 completed voter registration forms; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Johnson's work in the community has earned her widespread recognition and awards, including: the 2020 Roddenberry Civil Rights Fellow; the 2019 Human Rights Coalition Rising Advocate Award; *The Nashville Business Journal's* Women of Influence Award 2019; Nashville Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Superstar 2019; and the NAACP Ella Baker Power Award; and

WHEREAS, as a grassroots organization, The Equity Alliance helped homeowners keep their homes in historically Black North Nashville after the March 3 tornadoes, helped organize local protests for racial justice, and conducted the incredibly important COVID-19 needs assessment for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County to help Black and Latino residents receive an equitable share of the CARES Act relief money; and

WHEREAS, in December 2020, Gilead Sciences awarded The Equity Alliance a \$500,000 grant from the Racial Equity Community Impact Fund, one of only 20 organizations nationwide to receive such an award; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognizes Charlane Oliver and Tequila Johnson not only for being named *The Tennessean* 2020 People of the Year, but for the myriad of ways they make Nashville a better place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF

NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as recognizing Charlane Oliver and Tequila Johnson, co-founders and directors of The Equity Alliance, for being named *The Tennessean's* 2020 People of the Year.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.