

## 2009-K695

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating March 2009 as both Women's History and Women of Distinction Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge and celebrate individuals and events of historic significance which add vitality, sensitivity, understanding and inspiration to the diversity and value of the people of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Women of every economic, ethnic and religious background have made significant contributions that are reflected in our cultural, social, educational, industrial and economic diversity, and have contributed in many ways, including as writers, educators, scientists, heads of state, politicians, civil rights crusaders, artists, entertainers, businesswomen, military personnel, aviators, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, health professionals, engineers, religious leaders, judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, athletes, mothers, nurturers, and the building blocks of our communities; and

WHEREAS, Women who have become part of New York's lasting heritage by fighting against stereotypes, prejudice and seemingly insurmountable obstacles include Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), former slave and famous activist; Harriet Tubman (1820-1913), best-known "conductor" of the Underground Railroad and promoter of black education and women's rights; suffragettes Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902); world renowned folk artist Grandma Moses (1860-1961); famed reporter Nellie Bly (1867-1922); Sybil Ludington (1761-1839), known as the "female Paul Revere"; Barbara McClintock (1902-1992), Nobel Prize winning genetic scientist; and "First Lady of the World," Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962); and

WHEREAS, New York State has been, and continues to be, the home to many distinguished women who have made their mark in history as the

first in their field to succeed; representative of these "firsts" are contributions by women such as: Lady Deborah Moody (1586-1659), first woman grantee for land ownership in the New World; Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910), first female physician; Emma Willard (1787-1870), founder of the first endowed institution of education for women; hairdressing entrepreneur Madame C.J. Walker (1867-1919), Harlem leader and first self-made female millionaire in the U.S.; Buffalonian Louise Blanchard Bethune (1856-1913), first professional female architect in the Nation; Lucille Ball (1911-1989), actor and president of Desilu Productions, the first woman to lead a major Hollywood production company; New York City Correction Commissioner Katharine Bement Davis (1860-1935), the first woman to head a major City agency; Winifred Edgerton Merrill (1862-1951), the first American woman to receive a Ph.D. in mathematics; Dr. Mary Edwards Walker (1832-1919), the first and only woman to be presented with the Congressional Medal of Honor; Belva Lockwood (1830-1917), the first woman to practice law before the United States Supreme Court; and Sandra Day O'Connor, the first female justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, appointed by Ronald Reagan; and WHEREAS, This year, 22 extraordinary women are being honored upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a 2009 Woman of Distinction Award; this prestigious designation recognizes each and every one of them for making their communities a safer and better place to live; this auspicious occasion will be celebrated with a Reception on Saturday, June 6, 2009, at the Sandel Center, Rockville Centre, New York; and

WHEREAS, The distinguished 2009 Women of Distinction honorees include:

Joyce Berry, Lisa Conte, Nancy Fischer, Cecele Friedman, Tillie Genovese, Terri Sue Glass, Marsha Guerrir, Debbi Gyulay, Mary Herman,

Patricia Huber, Mary Ann Hughes, Britt Klein, Diane Laukaitis, Joan LoBello, Carol Manly, Patricia Mason, Patricia Ann McDonald, Diana Pirrone, Jeannine Rey, Claudia Siegel, Betsy Transom, and Ruth Anne

Zwarico; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes that New York State is the home to countless women who are strong and colorful threads, vital to the fabric of our rich heritage, who have contributed, and continue to add to the advancement of our culture through their traditional and non-traditional roles in society; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate March 2009 as both Women's History and Women of Distinction Month in the State of New York, and to congratulate this year's Women of Distinction; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the aforementioned honorees.