

2009-J5666

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Rainbow PUSH Coalition upon the occasion of hosting its 39th Annual Conference on June 12-16, 2010

WHEREAS, Events which demonstrate diversity and peace contribute to fulfilling our Nation's great legacy of equality and opportunity for all, profoundly enhancing our shared commitment to freedom and justice; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Rainbow PUSH Coalition upon the occasion of hosting its 39th Annual Conference on June 12-16, 2010; and

WHEREAS, The theme of this special event is "A More Perfect Union: The State of Civil Rights"; the daily topics include: Economic and Educational Recovery; Elected Officials and Students Agenda; International Business and Education; Labor and Clergy; and Health and Women; and

WHEREAS, The Rainbow PUSH Coalition is the product of a social justice movement that grew out of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) Operation Breadbasket; founded by Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Operation Breadbasket sought to combine theology and social justice, and to affect progressive economic, educational, and social policy in America; in 1966, Dr. King appointed Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. to serve as the first director of Operation Breadbasket in Chicago, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, The Rainbow PUSH Coalition is the result of a merger between Operation PUSH and the Rainbow Coalition; established in 1971 by Reverend Jackson, People United to Save Humanity (later changed from "Save" to "Serve")--PUSH, was an organization dedicated to improving the economic conditions of black communities across the United States; and WHEREAS, In the 1970s, PUSH expanded into areas of social and poli-

tical development using direct action campaigns, a weekly radio broadcast, and awards that honored prominent blacks in the United States and abroad; through Operation PUSH, Reverend Jackson established a platform from which to protect black homeowners, workers and businesses; and WHEREAS, PUSH also dedicated itself to developing young people through reading programs and the creation of PUSH Excel, a program that emphasized keeping inner city youth in school while assisting them with job placement; the organization was also highly successful at compelling major corporations with a presence in the black community to adopt affirmative action programs which prompted the companies to hire more black and minority executives and supervisors; and

WHEREAS, This also influenced these companies to include black suppliers, wholesalers, and distributors on their purchasing lists; PUSH also used prayer vigils and boycotts as a means to win job concessions for minorities from white businesses; and

WHEREAS, In 1984, following his first presidential campaign, Reverend Jackson launched the National Rainbow Coalition which sought equal rights for all Americans; a central thrust of the Coalition was the demand for social programs, voting rights, and affirmative action for minority groups left out by "Reaganomics"; and

WHEREAS, The National Rainbow Coalition opposed Ronald Reagan's policies for reducing domestic spending by government; his policies encouraged economic investment outside of the inner cities, resulting in high unemployment in minority communities along with a host of social problems; and

WHEREAS, The merger of the two organizations occurred in 1996 when Reverend Jackson moved back to Chicago after serving as shadow senator for Washington, D.C. from 1991 to 1996; the merger formed the Rainbow

PUSH Coalition with its mission to protect, defend, and gain civil rights by leveling the economic and educational playing fields, as well as promote peace and justice throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Rainbow PUSH Coalition upon the occasion of hosting its 39th Annual Conference; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.