

2011-J202

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION congratulating Bernell K. Grier, CEO of Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City, Inc. upon the occasion of graduating from the NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence in Community Development program

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to congratulate Bernell K. Grier, CEO of Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City, Inc. (NHSNYC) upon the occasion of graduating from the NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence in Community Development program on Thursday, March 4, 2010; and

WHEREAS, The NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence in Community Development program is the premiere organizational investment program and one of the ways that NeighborWorks America creates opportunities for people to improve their lives and strengthen their communities; the program builds on NeighborWorks America's strong track record as the nation's leading trainer of community development and affordable housing professionals; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier is one of 49 leaders to graduate with this Achieving Excellence class, a prestigious and highly selective training program for nonprofit executives offered by NeighborWorks America in collaboration with the Kennedy School of Government; and

WHEREAS, Only the most experienced and sophisticated executive directors and senior level staff participate in this program, and Bernell K. Grier's successful completion of the Achieving Excellence program is a testament to her exceptional skills and long-term commitment to improving our nation's lower-income communities and the lives of their residents; and

WHEREAS, Achieving Excellence is an 18-month educational program that

includes three formal sessions at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, as well as individual executive coaching, intensive peer learning and guidance from Douglas K. Smith, principal designer of the program and renowned expert on performance, learning, innovation and change; and

WHEREAS, This organizational investment program is designed specifically for seasoned executive directors and senior level staff in nonprofit community development organizations that focus on affordable housing, community revitalization or community economic development; through this program, Bernell K. Grier specifically addressed one of the most critical challenges facing her organization, identifying and implementing solutions that not only dramatically changed how the organization does business, but also fostered lasting community change; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier joined NHSNYC in 2004 as its Chief Operating Officer; prior to joining NHSNYC, she enjoyed a 30-year career in banking beginning at Chase and spanning through Bank of America and its predecessor banks, NatWest USA and Fleet Bank; and

WHEREAS, At Fleet, Bernell K. Grier successfully launched the 67-branch Fleet Community Bank network in New York and New Jersey and served as the Director of Community Development for New York, New Jersey and parts of Florida; in this capacity, she worked across the banks small business, mortgage lending, real estate and philanthropic founda-

tion units to ensure the bank's compliance with the United States Community Reinvestment Act, which resulted in outstanding CRA ratings; and

WHEREAS, Before that, Bernell K. Grier spent the majority of her banking career in commercial middle market lending before transitioning into the field of Community Development in 1995; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier's wealth of management experience and strong background in the financial industry has been a critical asset for helping NHSNYC steer through the economic crisis; she has earned a reputation as a stellar team-builder across the neighborhood offices and brought an important business discipline to its activities; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier has the ability to cultivate collaborative relationships with both community and industry partners; she has truly proven her leadership and long-standing commitment to underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, Parallel to her career in the banking industry, Bernell K.

Grier has more than 20 years of experience serving low-income communities and volunteering with a variety of not-for-profit organizations; most recently, she traveled to South Africa to work with Emmanuel Baptist Church, Brooklyn in developing a community resource center in the Wintervelt area; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier's very first job at the young age of 14 was as a community organizer, where she helped Harlem residents fight against illegal evictions; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier was recently appointed to the advisory board of the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York; currently, she serves on the advisory board of the New York University Furman Center for Real Estate and Public Policy, on the board of Neighborhood Restore, and serves on various committees with the National NeighborWorks Association (NNA); and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier is a graduate of the City University of New York, City College, and the James A. Johnson Community Leaders Program; and

WHEREAS, Bernell K. Grier has received numerous awards for career and community service, including the 2006 Career Achievement Award by the City College of New York Business Alumni Association and the New York Women's Agenda STAR in 2001; in addition, she is a Partnership for NYC David Rockefeller Fellow class of 2000; and

WHEREAS, NeighborWorks America awarded NHS with the 2009 Top Producer Award for being Number 1 in the network for Direct Investment into the community; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the well-being and vitality of their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Bernell K. Grier, CEO of Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City, Inc. upon the occasion of graduating from the NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence in Community Development program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Bernell K. Grier.