

## **2011-J1184**

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 39th anniversary of the death of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and paying tribute to his life and accomplishments

WHEREAS, From time to time we take note of certain individuals who we wish to recognize for their valued contributions and to publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to acknowledge the death of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and to pay tribute to his life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was born November 29, 1908, in New Haven, Connecticut, son of Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., a Baptist minister and pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City; and

WHEREAS, Following his graduation from high school, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. conducted his undergraduate studies at both the City College of New York and Colgate University, and received a Master of Arts degree in religious education from Columbia University in 1931; he was a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity; and

WHEREAS, In the 1930s, during "The Great Depression" Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. emerged as a prominent civil rights leader in Harlem due in large part to his activism and advocacy for jobs and housing for African-Americans; and

WHEREAS, As chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Employment, he organized rent strikes, and public campaigns to force local private and public companies including Harlem Hospital to hire African-American employees; and

WHEREAS, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. succeeded his father as Pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in 1937; in 1939, he organized a picket line at the New York World Fair's offices which resulted in an increase in the number of African-American employees from 200 to more than 700;

in 1941, he was the first African-American to be elected to the New York City Council; and

WHEREAS, In 1944, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., became the first black Congressman from the state of New York as well as any Northern state with the exception of Illinois; after becoming Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., he challenged informal segregation on Capitol Hill; and

WHEREAS, In 1961, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. became Chairman of the Education and Labor Committee; during his tenure as Chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, he supervised federal programs for increasing and expanding minimum wage, equality in pay for women, education for the deaf, nursing education, vocational training, standards for wages and work hours, and aid for elementary and secondary education; and

WHEREAS, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was vital in promulgating legislation that made lynching a federal crime, desegregated schools and challenged the practice of charging African-Americans a poll tax to vote in the southern states; and

WHEREAS, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.'s commitment to racial equality and equality for all individuals influenced the enactment in numerous beneficial laws; and

WHEREAS, On April 4, 1972, following a brief illness, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. passed away at the age of 63; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the anniversary of the death of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and to pay tribute to his life and accomplishments; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the New York State Black, Puerto Rican and Hispanic Legislative Caucus, and to the family of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.