

2011-J2562

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Gilbert Scott-Heron, an American poet, musician, and author

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Gilbert Scott-Heron of Harlem, New York, died on Friday, May 27, 2011, at the age of 62; and

WHEREAS, Gilbert "Gil" Scott-Heron was born on April 1, 1949, in Chicago, Illinois, to Bobbie Scott-Heron and Gil Heron; and

WHEREAS, Gilbert Scott-Heron's mother sang with the New York Oratorio Society, and his father, nicknamed "The Black Arrow," was a soccer player who, in the 1950s, became the first black athlete to play for Glasgow Celtic Football Club in Scotland; and

WHEREAS, Gilbert Scott-Heron was a long time resident of Harlem, New York; he was an American poet, musician, and author known primarily for his work as a spoken word performer; and

WHEREAS, When Gilbert Scott-Heron was 12 years-old, he moved with his mother to the Bronx, and enrolled in DeWitt Clinton High School; soon thereafter, he was granted a full scholarship to The Feildston School; and

WHEREAS, After high school, Gilbert Scott-Heron attended Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, as it was the college chosen by his biggest influence, Langston Hughes; and

WHEREAS, After about two years at Lincoln University, Gilbert Scott-Heron took a year off to write the novels "The Vulture" and "The Nigger Factory"; and

WHEREAS, Although Gilbert Scott-Heron never received his undergraduate

degree, he received a master's degree in creative writing in 1972 from Johns Hopkins University; his 1972 dissertation was titled, "Circle of Stone"; and

WHEREAS, Gilbert Scott-Heron began his recording career in 1970 with the LP "Small Talk at 125th and Lenox"; the album's 15 tracks dealt with themes such as the superficiality of television and mass consumerism, the hypocrisy of some would-be Black revolutionaries, and white middle-class ignorance of the difficulties faced by inner-city residents; and

WHEREAS, Gilbert Scott-Heron's poetic style has been influential upon every generation of hip hop music since his popularity began; as such, he has been described by music writers as "the godfather of rap" and "the black Bob Dylan"; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit, imbued with a sense of compassion, Gilbert Scott-Heron leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Gilbert Scott-Heron, an American poet, musician, and author; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Gilbert Scott-Heron.