

2011-J3200

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION recognizing the exemplary public service of Dr. Ruth Simmons, President of Brown University

WHEREAS, A great state is only as great as those individuals who perform exemplary service on behalf of their community, whether through unique achievement in professional life or other endeavors, or simply through a lifetime of good citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to recognize the exemplary public service of Dr. Ruth Simmons, President of Brown University; and

WHEREAS, This leading educator has embodied America's promise through her distinguished service to her community, Brown University, and the State of New York; subsequently, she is being recognized by Harlem's internationally acclaimed Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ruth Simmons is the youngest of 12 children born to an East Texas farmer and his wife, who worked part-time as a maid; by closely observing the hard work and dedication of her parents, she was inspired to first improve her life through learning and by dedicating her life to working to help others enhance their lives through education; and

WHEREAS, Going from the segregated public schools of Houston, where she excelled, to Dillard University, an historically African-American institution, Dr. Ruth Simmons prepared herself by obtaining a post graduate degree in Romance Languages and Literature from Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, Embarking on her career, beginning as a French professor before entering the field of academic administration, Dr. Ruth Simmons

served with distinction at the University of Southern California, Princeton University, and Spelman College, the nation's most prestigious historically black college for women; and

WHEREAS, Named president of Smith College, the country's largest university for women, Dr. Ruth Simmons became the first African-American to lead a Seven Sisters school; similarly in 2001, she was appointed President of Brown University; she became the first African-American to administer an Ivy League school and became the first female President of Brown University; and

WHEREAS, Among the many initiatives of her affiliations, one of the most significant occurred at Brown, where serving as President, Dr. Ruth Simmons did research underscoring the university's intimate relationship, paralleling our nation's history to African slavery; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, and of far greater value, Dr. Ruth Simmons identified and implemented a schedule of reparative, affirming actions, which have proven to be a beneficial model for schools with a similar history; and

WHEREAS, Beyond being a loving mother to her two biological children, Dr. Ruth Simmons has become a true role model for so many who have been touched by her compassionate concern and zeal for learning; she truly believes that the value of knowledge is second only to the value of love and empathy; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention it is appropriate to publicly proclaim and commend those individuals for the edification and emulation of others; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize the exemplary public service of Dr. Ruth Simmons, President of Brown University; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dr. Ruth Simmons.