

2013-K1051

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Bronx County

WHEREAS, Each and every city, town, village, and hamlet within its borders proudly resonates with the rich and noble history of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commemorate the anniversary of the founding of municipalities throughout the State, noting in turn their contributions to the fabric and progression of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Bronx County, the 62nd and last county in New York State; and

WHEREAS, The Bronx first assumed a distinct legal identity when it became a borough of Greater New York in 1898; on January 1, 1914, Bronx County, which has the same boundaries as the borough, was officially incorporated as the last of New York State's 62 counties; and

WHEREAS, Over its 100 year history, the development of Bronx County has reflected the development of the State and the United States of America, as home to countless thousands of immigrants from around the world, as an early hub of manufacturing and transportation for the region, and as an iconic figure in the American cultural imagination; and

WHEREAS, In 1914 the Kingsbridge Armory, reputedly the largest in the world at five acres, was completed; by 1920 the population within the county had reached 732,016 people, and in 1923 Yankee Stadium opened with Babe Ruth hitting a home run, giving it the nickname "The House That Ruth Built"; the Yankees went on to win its very first World Series

title that same year; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe High School, the first public institution of secondary education to open east of the Bronx River opened in 1925; Morris High School was Bronx County's first public high school; and WHEREAS, In 1930 the population of The Bronx reached 1,265,258, with almost 49% of its residents of Jewish heritage; the explosion in population was accompanied by the expansion of mass transit as a subway line was built under the Grand Concourse from 161st Street and Yankee Stadium to Norwood/205th Street in 1933; the borough's only full underground line, it is known today as the B and D train lines; and

WHEREAS, Dramatic changes in transportation continued over the next decade; the Henry Hudson Bridge, the Henry Hudson Parkway and the Triborough Bridge all opened to traffic in 1936, and the Bronx-White-stone Bridge opened to traffic in 1939; and

WHEREAS, Important developments in housing also took place as the population continued to expand; in 1938, Parkchester, a development of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, began construction, becoming the largest integral housing complex in the nation when completed; and

WHEREAS, By 1950 the population of Bronx County had reached 1,451,277, and African-American migration from Harlem and the American South reached record-breaking numbers at almost 98,000; in 1953, New York City saw the highest influx of Puerto Rican migrants from the island, with The Bronx absorbing the bulk of the migration; and

WHEREAS, Aware of the significance of The Bronx in New York State and national history, in 1955 the Bronx County Historical Society was founded, dedicated to the mission of preserving Bronx history for years to come; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s the demands brought on by population growth resulted in significant infrastructure development; the Throgs Neck Bridge opened in 1961 to relieve traffic on the Whitestone Bridge, enhancing the link between Bronx County and Queens County, and facili-

tating connection to New Jersey, upstate New York and Connecticut; Co-op City, the largest cooperative housing development in the world, was completed in 1967-68; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the 1960s decade also ushered in important cultural changes reflective of Bronx County's diversity and pride of heritage; in 1966, Herman Badillo became the 8th Borough President of The Bronx, the first Puerto Rican to hold that office, and his 1970 successor, Robert Abrams, was the county's first Jewish Borough President; in 1968, the Museum of Bronx History, operated by the Bronx Historical Society, opened in the 1758 historic landmark Valentine-Varian House; and

WHEREAS, During the 1970s, Bronx County's impact on popular culture found expression in 1973 when DJ Kool Herc created the musical movement known as hip-hop and The Bronx address of 1520 Sedgwick Avenue became the birthplace of the genre; in 1976 the Bronx County Historical Society began to operate the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage as a historic house museum, and, in 1977, President Jimmy Carter's visit to The Bronx, projected a powerful, negative image of The Bronx across the nation and around the world as the news media displayed the urban decay and devastation of parts of the county; and

WHEREAS, Despite its urban challenges and a steep decline in residents, Bronx County experienced other growth in the 1980s; in 1982 the Bronx Museum of the Arts moved to its permanent home, a former synagogue on East 165th Street and the Grand Concourse; in 1986, Fordham Plaza was built; in 1990 the population decline began to reverse itself, climbing up to 1,203,789; and

WHEREAS, In 1997, The Bronx was designated an "All-America City" by the National Civic League in recognition of the county's work to identify and tackle community-wide challenges and achieve uncommon results; the success of those efforts were reflected in continued population growth as the year 2000 saw 1,332,666 people living in the county; and

WHEREAS, The new millennium brought exciting new changes in and

national attention to Bronx County; in 2006, City Lore's award-winning documentary, "From Mambo to Hip Hop: A South Bronx Tale," premiered on PBS; on April 2, 2009, the new Yankee Stadium opened, hosting a work-out day in front of fans from the community, and also in 2009, Bronx-born and raised Sonia Sotomayor was nominated and confirmed an Associate

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Justice of the United States Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, By the end of the 21st century's first decade, the population of The Bronx had jumped to 1,385,108; just two years later, in 2012, the number reached 1,408,473; and

WHEREAS, Bronx County's future looks bright, fueled by the energy, vitality, and creativity of its residents; the 2013 agreement to convert the Kingsbridge Armory into Kingsbridge National Ice Center is just one example of the potential growth the next century will bring; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of Bronx County's rich history and enduring contribution to the heritage of the State of New York, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to join in the celebration of this auspicious Centennial, so that present and future generations may come to appreciate the unique significance which its history plays in the progression of our State and Nation's evolution; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Bronx County; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Ruben Diaz Jr., President of the Borough of the Bronx; Bronx Centennial Commission; Bronx Historical Society; and Bronx Chamber of Commerce.