

## 2013-K1335

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the founding of Woodcrest in Rifton, New York, the first Bruderhof community in the United States

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State that are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who 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, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the founding of Woodcrest in Rifton, New York, the first Bruderhof community in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1920, in Sannerz, Germany, by Eberhard Arnold, the Bruderhof is a Christian organization known for its exemplary contributions in education, care for the needy, excellence in business, and interfaith cooperation; and

WHEREAS, Expelled from Germany by the Nazi regime in 1937, Bruderhof members initially found refuge in England and South America before settling in Rifton, New York, in 1954; and

WHEREAS, In 1954, the Woodcrest Bruderhof in the United States in Rifton, New York, was started in response to a dramatic increase in the number of American guests; hundreds of new followers joined, many from other communal groups across the country; and

WHEREAS, Today the Woodcrest congregations boast a continuously expanding membership with 320 people residing in Woodcrest and over 1,500 individuals living in communities throughout the Hudson Valley; and

WHEREAS, Following the Anabaptist tradition, members of the Bruderhof

lead a life devoted to the core values of their faith and practice; unconditional forgiveness, the renouncement of violence, faithful life-long marriages, and humble servitude to God and neighbors; and WHEREAS, Dedicated to an existence of selflessness and service the Bruderhof members have volunteered and partnered with several regional organizations who offer crucial services to those in the community including the Boys and Girls Club of Ulster County, Rural Ulster Preservation Company, and United Way; and WHEREAS, In collaboration with other groups and through their own efforts, the Bruderhof has engaged in community outreach activities such as feeding local emergency workers at disaster scenes, urban renewal projects, post storm clean-up and providing meeting space for local workshops; and WHEREAS, The Bruderhof sponsors their own educational programs including "Breaking the Cycle of Violence," which promotes peace, forgiveness, non-violent conflict resolution and strengthens communications between law enforcement and at-risk populations; and WHEREAS, The Bruderhof congregations make immense contributions to the area's economy through their business endeavors; Community Playthings, a school furniture and playground equipment manufacturer, Rifton Equipment, which produces tools and therapy products for those with disabilities and Danthonia Designs, which fabricates custom made signage; and WHEREAS, Promoting excellence in the education of our youth, the Woodcrest Bruderhof acquired the former Mount St. Alphonsus Seminary and Retreat Complex in Esopus, New York, in 2012, and now operates a four-year non-public high school on the premises which currently educates over 200 students; and

WHEREAS, Extending their reach beyond their own neighborhoods, the Bruderhof leads by example and support efforts which promote greater academic opportunities for all children and reduce poverty, suffering, war and injustice on a national and global scale; 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 commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the founding of Woodcrest in Rifton, New York, the first Bruderhof community founded in the United States; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Woodcrest in Rifton, New York.