

2015-J1442

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Victor Gotbaum, American labor leader, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

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, Victor Gotbaum of Manhattan, New York, died on Sunday, April 5, 2015, at the age of 93; and

WHEREAS, Victor Gotbaum was born to Harry Gotbaum and the former Mollie Bernstein, on September 5, 1921, in Brooklyn, New York; he graduated from Samuel J. Tilden High School in Brooklyn, and at the young age of 19, took a job at an uncle's printing shop; and

WHEREAS, In August of 1943, Victor Gotbaum married his first wife Sarah Cohen; together, they raised four wonderful children; and

WHEREAS, Victor Gotbaum proudly served his country as a member of the United States Army as a radio operator and machine-gunner, and rose to the rank of Sergeant; he landed in Normandy two weeks after D-Day and earned six battle stars as he crossed through France, Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia and Germany; and

WHEREAS, After being discharged, Victor Gotbaum earned a degree in political science from Brooklyn College in 1948; two years later, he obtained a Master's degree in International Affairs from Columbia University, and was then hired to teach political science at Brooklyn College; and

WHEREAS, Victor Gotbaum distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, Victor Gotbaum was then employed as both a Foreign Affairs

Officer in the State Department and a Program Officer at the Labor Department; in 1954, he taught union leaders in Ankara, Turkey, about collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS, Victor Gotbaum's commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, In 1955, Victor Gotbaum was appointed Assistant Director of Education for the Amalgamated Meat Cutters in Chicago, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, From 1957-1964, Victor Gotbaum led the Chicago district council of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and

WHEREAS, One year later, Victor Gotbaum re-located to New York, where he was appointed Executive Director of District Council (DC) 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and

WHEREAS, Under Victor Gotbaum's powerful leadership, DC 37 successfully organized thousands of municipal hospital workers in the 1960s, and helped create New York City's Office of Collective Bargaining; and

WHEREAS, By 1975, DC 37 had become a powerhouse comprised of 110,000 members, representing New York City's secretaries, zookeepers, social workers, accountants, sewage treatment workers, computer programmers, and school lunch aides; and

WHEREAS, Victor Gotbaum married his second wife, the former Betsy Flower, in 1977; and

WHEREAS, After retiring from District Council 37 in 1986, at the age of 65, Victor Gotbaum founded the Center for Labor-Management Policy at the City University of New York; he later held the esteemed position of Director of the National Center for Collective Bargaining at Baruch College, in New York City; and

WHEREAS, In 1993, Victor Gotbaum was appointed to the New York City Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his wife, Betsy, Victor Gotbaum is survived by

three sons, Joshua, Irving, and Noah; one daughter, Rachel; one step-daughter, Katherin; and eight grandchildren, as well as three step-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Victor Gotbaum 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 Victor Gotbaum, American labor leader, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Victor Gotbaum.