

2015-K493

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Helen Keller International on May 18, 2015

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State 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 100th Anniversary of Helen Keller International, to be celebrated at the Spirit of Helen Keller Gala on May 18, 2015, at The New York Public Library, New York City; and

WHEREAS, Helen Keller International, headquartered in the Flatiron District of New York City, is one of the world's oldest and most respected non-profit organizations in the field of global development; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1915, Helen Keller International is dedicated to saving the sight and lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged; the staff of this vital group combats the causes and consequences of blindness and malnutrition by establishing programs based on evidence and research in vision, health and nutrition; and

WHEREAS, Helen Keller International envisions a world where no one suffers from preventable and treatable blindness, where no one suffers from malnutrition, and where all people live life to their fullest potential; and

WHEREAS, Helen Keller, the organization's founder, overcame impossible odds and lived a remarkable life dedicated to the betterment of others which made people throughout the world rethink what is possible; and

WHEREAS, Helen Keller International, established 100 years ago, helps people in some of the world's poorest communities by treating and preventing various conditions, including anemia, cataracts, refractive errors, vision loss from diabetes, intestinal worms, river blindness, schistosomiasis, trachoma, and vitamin A deficiency, all afflictions that rob people, especially young children and women, of the ability to live life to the fullest; and

WHEREAS, Currently, Helen Keller International funds more than 180 programs in 21 African and Asian countries; the staff helps women secure their family's future by teaching them to raise their own nutritious foods which provide regular access to healthy food and also income; and

WHEREAS, In addition, they train both local health workers in the Republic of Niger to treat and prevent malnourishment in children in their villages, and teachers in Cambodia to become agents of change in their own communities by promoting hand-washing and other practices to prevent intestinal worms which keep children out of school; and

WHEREAS, Helen Keller International partners with companies throughout Africa to ensure that staple foods are fortified with essential nutrients; and it also enables children with disabilities in Indonesia to access education through inclusive schools; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, this valuable organization operates ChildSight, an eye health program in the United States which provides free vision screenings and prescription eyeglasses to tens of thousands of students living in poverty in New York, California, Connecticut, New Jersey and Ohio; and

WHEREAS, Helen Keller International serves 300 million people each year living in poverty, continually adhering to Helen Keller's adage of "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much"; and

WHEREAS, For its dedicated service to those less fortunate, Helen Keller International has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the Charity Navigator's highest four star rating, the

Antonio Champalimaud Vision Award, the Henry R. Kravis Prize in Leadership, and a BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award; and

WHEREAS, The ability of this organization to respond to changing needs over the past 100 years has sustained its viability as an important resource; Helen Keller International is well prepared and positioned to move into its second century maintaining a commitment to its mission of eliminating preventable blindness and vision loss and significantly reducing malnutrition and its devastating impact in our world; and WHEREAS, Organizations and individuals devoted to improving the quality of life for others, enabling them to build lives of dignity and self-worth are deserving of the highest praise and recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Helen Keller International on May 18, 2015; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Helen Keller International.