

2015-J2170

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the observance of the 5th Annual Thurgood Marshall Day in New York on May 17, 2015

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body believes that creating a day to honor Thurgood Marshall will ensure that the State of New York and its residents commemorate and acknowledge the efforts made by Thurgood Marshall; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Thurgood Marshall is one of the most well-known figures in the history of the civil rights movement in America and the first African American United States Supreme Court Justice, serving for 24 years between 1967 and 1991; and

WHEREAS, In the 1940s, Thurgood Marshall successfully argued for the desegregation of a school in Hillburn, New York, Rockland County; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Thurgood Marshall is most commonly known for his stellar representation of the NAACP before the Supreme Court of the United States in the matter of *Brown v. The Board of Education*, which led the Supreme Court to declare the segregation of public schools illegal in the United States; this year marks the 60th Anniversary of this landmark decision; and

WHEREAS, In addition to desegregation of schools, Thurgood Marshall was a lead advocate who successfully argued challenges against "white only" primary elections and restrictive covenants in real property against people of color; and

WHEREAS, The Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity - Eta Chi Lambda Chapter has worked tirelessly to ensure that the legacy of Thurgood Marshall is recalled and honored; and

WHEREAS, Through the efforts of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity - Eta Chi Lambda Chapter, a historical commemorative marker was erected in the Village of Hillburn, New York, commemorating his efforts; and

WHEREAS, Justice Thurgood Marshall passed away on January 24, 1993, and, in his eulogy to the late Thurgood Marshall, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, referring to the words above the front entrance to the United States Supreme Court, "Equal Justice for All", stated "Surely no one individual did more to make these words a reality than Thurgood Marshall"; and

WHEREAS, The notion of Equal Justice Under Law requires constant and personal attention by each and every citizen if it is to work for the benefit of all; and

WHEREAS, The late Justice Thurgood Marshall was one of this country's premier champions of civil rights; he championed the most important premises of democratic government -- freedom, equality and justice for all -- and successfully utilized the courthouse to advocate for, and champion the cause of, equal treatment under the law; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the observance of the 5th Annual Thurgood Marshall Day in New York on May 17, 2015.