

## 2015-J2758

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and applaud organizations and institutions within the State of New York which work towards equality and justice for those who have historically faced discrimination and mistreatment; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation; and

WHEREAS, New York's statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights and advocacy organization, the mission of the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation is to win equality and justice for LGBT New Yorkers and their families; and

WHEREAS, Through this vital organization's education, organizing and advocacy programs, the members work toward creating a broadly diverse alliance of LGBT people and allies in government, communities of faith, labor, all sectors of the workforce and the intersection of all social justice movements to achieve equality for LGBT New Yorkers and the broader goals of social, racial, gender and economic justice; and

WHEREAS, The Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation has played an instrumental role in the LGBT civil rights movement, helping to achieve enormous reforms such as the codification of marriage equality into law in 2011, the passage of the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA) in 2002, the approval of a 30% rent cap for lower income New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS, transgender-inclusive benefits for Rochester city employees, the removal of burdensome and unnecessary barriers transgender New Yorkers faced in correcting gender markers on identity

documents, and the passage of transgender-inclusive non-discrimination ordinances by several cities and counties across the state; and

WHEREAS, The Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation continues to tirelessly advocate for the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA), which would prohibit discrimination against transgender New Yorkers based on gender identity and expression, and legislation which would ban the dangerous practice of conversion therapy on all LGBT minors by licensed mental health professionals; and

WHEREAS, Through their diligent efforts and with the support and participation of committed people all across New York, the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation has won countless victories on the state and local levels, providing much needed and deserved support to LGBT families and relationships; and

WHEREAS, Through the coordination of the New York State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health and Human Services Network, a coalition of over 50 local health and human service organizations serving the LGBT population throughout New York State, the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation has been instrumental in creating a united voice for the health and well-being needs of millions of LGBT New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, Despite recent, unprecedented visibility of the LGBT community, greater understanding of the unique issues facing the LGBT community, especially the transgender community, has lagged behind; through its education, outreach, and training efforts across the state, the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation has contributed to broader awareness and understanding of these issues and has contributed to important policy solutions that have benefitted the state as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing that the LGBT community still lacks many rights and protections which most New Yorkers take for granted, the Empire

State Pride Agenda Foundation continues to resolutely pursue justice and reform for LGBT New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, Our society benefits greatly from the purposeful efforts of

individuals who unite to improve the quality of life of others, advance social justice, and work toward dignity and respect for all New Yorkers; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation.