



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Senator Rivera Introduces Resolution Congratulating Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir

GUSTAVO RIVERA March 14, 2011

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On March 1, 2011, Senator Gustavo Rivera introduced a legislative resolution numbered S. 675, congratulating the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir upon the occasion of being named the “Best Choir in New York City” at the Bronx Zoo’s inaugural SING! for Wildlife competition on December 30, 2010. Senator Rivera spoke in support of his resolution on the floor of the Senate.

Click here to view video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V9eDoLDwMc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V9eDoLDwMc)

**Below is a copy of Senator Rivera’s floor statement in support of the Resolution Congratulating Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir:**

“I stand today to congratulate the students from the Celia Cruz Bronx High School for their Best Choir in New York City win just a few weeks ago. I was hoping Senator Nozzolio would be here since he was thanking the Seneca Elementary School Choir and we’re in the same field here. They actually won the first competition that was held by the Bronx Zoo, the Sing! for Wildlife competition.

I saw them perform at the Hard Rock Café just a few weeks ago. They started with Route 66, a kind of jazzy number before moving on to some classical choral performances and then finishing off with a Phantom of the Opera rendition. These kids are an inspiration. The Celia Cruz High School is a couple blocks from my home and I got to see them and hear them for the first time just a few weeks ago.

It is a testament to the importance of Arts education in our schools. The way they became a tight choral organization, how they used the arts to not only learn how to perform, but to perform better at school. They are actually almost all of them honor students. These are kids that unfortunately could not be here today, but I wanted to make sure that I stood up and that I said that I congratulate them and wish them nothing but success.

Also to remind everyone that it is for programs like this that we are fighting for. Not only do they get to sing and perform, but they get to use the arts as a tool to become better students and better people. I also want to make sure to congratulate their parents and their teachers, particularly the Choir Director, Lisa Gwayzda who is an amazing performer herself. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this victory for them and this victory for New York City.”

**Below is the text for the legislative resolution S. 675, congratulating the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir upon the occasion of being named the “Best Choir in New York City” at the Bronx Zoo’s inaugural SING! for Wildlife competition on December 30, 2010:**

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and  
  
pay tribute to those young people within the great Empire State who have  
  
made strong contributions to their communities and who serve as role

models for their peers; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the importance of the performing arts, which act to inspire, enlighten, and unify people from all cultural backgrounds through the power of human expression; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir upon the occasion of being named the "Best Choir in New York City" at the Bronx Zoo's inaugural SING! for Wildlife competition on Thursday, December 30, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 2003, the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music combines a rigorous academic program with high-quality music instruction, which the students receive with assistance from the CUNY Lehman College Music Department; and

WHEREAS, The sing-off was part of the Bronx Zoo's effort to bring homegrown culture to the City during the cold winter months, as well as to raise awareness for One Percent for Culture, a non-partisan grassroots campaign which aims to encourage New York City officials to fund cultural organizations throughout the City with one percent of the municipal budget; and

WHEREAS, The famed Hard Rock Cafe sponsored the event, which featured 250 students from seven New York City schools; and

WHEREAS, In the final round of competition, the 22-strong student choir, under the leadership of Choir Director Lisa Gwasda, the Celia Cruz vocalists performed a 15-minute medley of Andrew Lloyd Webber-composed songs, belting out vocals for the chance to gain recognition and grant money and to encourage support for wildlife conservation; and

WHEREAS, Evaluated on the basis of originality, performance, talent, and audience reaction, the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir's remarkable performance won them the title of the "Best Choir in New York City"; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the victory, the Celia Cruz choir won a substantial grant for its choir program and the opportunity to perform at the Hard Rock Cafe in Times Square, where the school's name will be prominently displayed on the iconic concert venue's marquee; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to commend and pay tribute to those young people who, by achieving outstanding success in musical competition, have inspired and brought pride to our majestic Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir upon

the occasion of being named the "Best Choir in New York City" at the Bronx Zoo's inaugural SING! for Wildlife competition on December 30, 2010; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music Show Choir.