

2015-J4419

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Women's City Club of New York, and paying tribute to this year's Civic Spirit Award honorees

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those organizations within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals and organizations it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Women's City Club of New York on Thursday, April 21, 2016, and to pay tribute to this year's Civic Spirit Award honorees; and

WHEREAS, This year's distinguished Civic Spirit Award recipients include: Maria Cuomo Cole, Chair, H.E.L.P., USA and President, Cuomo Cole Productions; Jessica Neuwirth, Founder/President, ERA Coalition, Founder/Director, Donor Direct Action, and Founder, Equality Now; Jennifer Buffett, Co-President and Pamela Shifman, Executive Director, NoVo Foundation; and Helen D. Reavis, Managing Director, Reavis Parent Lehrer, LLC; and

WHEREAS, Women's City Club of New York (WCC), established in 1915, is a nonprofit, non-partisan, multi-issue activist organization dedicated to improving the lives of all New Yorkers; to promote responsive government, the WCC shapes public policy through education, issue analysis, advocacy and civic participation; and

WHEREAS, The founders and early members of the Women's City Club of

New York were visionaries and innovators; among them were: Katharine B. Davis, who became the first woman to hold a top-level post in government when she was appointed New York City's Commissioner of Corrections in 1914; Ida Tarbell, a journalist whose book, THE HISTORY OF THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY, resulted in the dismantling of the Standard Oil monopoly; Frances Perkins, the first woman appointed to the United States Cabinet and the longest-serving cabinet member; Belle Moskowitz, a pioneer in the use of political relations as evidenced by her leadership of Alfred E. Smith's campaigns for Governor and U.S. President; Virginia Gildersleeve, the first Dean of Barnard College and a leading advocate to ensure Columbia University admitted women to its School of Law; Lillian Wald, a nurse, advocate of social welfare programs and a founding member of the NAACP; and Alice Duer Miller, a poet and novelist, as well as the first president of WCC; and

WHEREAS, In addition, within five years of the founding of WCC, Eleanor Roosevelt became a member and for several years chaired its Legislative Committee and served as a Board Member; and

WHEREAS, The Founders of the Women's City Club of New York were driven by the complexity of civic life and embraced a multi-issue advocacy agenda; they argued and mobilized women for prison reform, workers' rights, higher education for women, quality public school education, reproductive rights, transparent government practices, and better housing for families; and

WHEREAS, WCC's very first public meeting in 1916, was with the Warden of Sing Sing to discuss the role of women in prison reform while also helping to organize a rally in Union Square to demand safe working conditions for women in garment factories; and

WHEREAS, On September 15, 1917, the organization financed and established the first free maternity clinic in New York City through which they had only hoped to reach 1,000 patients but recorded reaching over 2,300 by October 1, 1918 and 3000, by January 1919; and

WHEREAS, Just one year later, WCC founders extended their civic engagement globally when they financed and sent a volunteer ambulance unit of eight fully equipped trucks to France; history notes that women's participation in WWI changed the opinion of President Woodrow Wilson and congressional leaders in favor of giving women the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, In 1920, WCC had succeeded in abolishing sex discrimination in the State civil service, and by mid-1924, they launched the campaign for a 48-hour work week for women and participated in the drafting and advocacy of New York State's first child labor laws; and

WHEREAS, Today, WCC continues its pursuit of economic, racial and gender justice, with the goal to dismantle the social inequalities that deprive citizens of the opportunity to thrive; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals and organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Women's City Club of New York, and to pay tribute to this year's Civic Spirit Award honorees; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Women's City Club of New York, and the aforementioned honorees.