

2015-J4718

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Malik "Phife Dawg" Taylor, hip hop pioneer, distinguished citizen, and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to the lives of individuals whose commitment and creative talents have contributed to the entertainment and cultural enrichment of their community and the entire State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Malik Taylor, also known as "Phife Dawg", a legendary American rapper, and co-founder of the seminal hip hop group, A Tribe Called Quest, died on Tuesday, March 22, 2016, at the age of 45; and

WHEREAS, Born in Queens, New York, on November 20, 1970, Malik Isaac Taylor was of Trinidadian descent, and grew up in St. Albans where he began experimenting with music as a protege of the local Native Tongues Posse; currently there is a petition to rename St. Albans Park in his honor; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, Malik "Phife Dawg" Taylor formed A Tribe Called Quest with his childhood friend, Jonathan "Q-Tip" Davis, along with DJ and producer Ali Shaheed Muhammad and Jarobi White; and

WHEREAS, After signing with Jive Records on the strength of their 1989 demo tape, Phife Dawg and A Tribe Called Quest would go on to sell millions of albums and record such classic hits as "Scenario," "Electric Relaxation," and "Bonita Applebum"; and

WHEREAS, Known for their politically and socially conscious lyrics as well as the positive energy which could often be found in their songs, A Tribe Called Quest became one of the most beloved hip hop groups in history as well as an alternative to the pop acts and gangster rappers at the time; and

WHEREAS, In May of 1990, Phife Dawg was diagnosed with Diabetes Melli-

tus Type 2, and rapped about being a "funky diabetic" in his group's single "Oh My God"; he was lauded for this admission and for bringing awareness to the hip-hop community about diabetes and other diseases which disproportionately affect African-American males; and WHEREAS, In 1998, Phife Dawg separated from A Tribe Called Quest after the release of the group's fifth album, "The Love Movement," and released his only solo album, "Ventilation: Da LP," in 2000; and WHEREAS, Over the years, Phife Dawg reunited with his former group mates multiple times, including at the Rock the Bells festival in 2004, 2008 and 2010, and most recently in 2013, as an opening act for two New York shows on Kanye West's "Yeezus" tour; and WHEREAS, In addition, Phife Dawg and his relationship with the other members of A Tribe Called Quest was the subject of the 2011 documentary "Beats, Rhymes and Life: The Travels of a Tribe Called Quest"; and WHEREAS, An avid sports fan, Phife Dawg, was known for his love of the New York Knicks basketball team, and has been featured on various radio shows, as well as sports programming on ESPN; furthermore, he was a playable character in the video games NBA 2K7 and NBA 2K9; and WHEREAS, After being on a waiting list for two years, Phife Dawg received a kidney transplant from his wife in 2008; this was unsuccessful, however, and by 2012, he once again required a transplant; and WHEREAS, Committed to passing on lifesaving medical information to those in need, Phife Dawg was at the time of his death, in the early stages of starting his own charity foundation, Fight for Life, which would spread awareness of diabetes, renal failure, and lupus through charity basketball games, concerts and other special events; and WHEREAS, Respected for his intelligence, humor, and emotional candor, Phife Dawg greatly contributed to the evolution of hip hop, and played a vital role in helping this musical genre transcend the boundaries of race, class and politics in the modern world; and WHEREAS, An artist of colossal talent and charisma, Malik "Phife Dawg"

Taylor will be missed by his family, friends, fans and all who knew him; his dedication to his music and his heritage leaves an indelible legacy which will inspire others for years to come; Malik leaves to mourn him: his parents, Walt Richard Taylor and Chryl Allicson Boyce-Taylor; brother, Zachary; his devoted wife, Deisha Head-Taylor; stepson, David Armstrong Jr.; neices, Kira and Kaylia; Uncle Anslem Boyce; Uncle Roger Taylor; Great Aunt Virginia Alexander; Desciana Swinger; step-mother, Connie Taylor; close friends and co-Founders of A Tribe Called Quest Tp and Ali; best friends Dion "Roots" (manager), Jarobi (ATCQ), and Steve; PJ Best; Sue-Chin Keane; Michael, Mark and Zinzi Clemmons, Karole and Morgan; and Peggy Best and family; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Malik "Phife Dawg" Taylor, hip hop pioneer, distinguished citizen, and devoted member of his community; and be it further
RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of the late Malik "Phife Dawg" Taylor.