

## 2015-J5794

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION congratulating Odell Ross upon the occasion of celebrating her 100th Birthday

WHEREAS, Senior citizens bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the increasingly active roles they play in today's society; their past contributions and future participation are a vital part of, and valuable asset to, the fabric of community life and activity; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate Odell Ross upon the occasion of celebrating her 100th Birthday on Saturday, July 16, 2016, at Lakeview House Restaurant, Newburgh, New York; and

WHEREAS, This exceptional centenarian, with her zest for life, has inspired and enhanced the lives of her family and friends; and

WHEREAS, Born in 1916, Odell Ross continues to live independently in her small apartment on Cerone Place, in Newburgh, New York; she spent her early childhood and youth in the rural, red hills of North Carolina in a close knit family of five siblings, as well as a host of aunts, uncles and cousins; and

WHEREAS, Growing up, Odell Ross learned to be industrious, fair and honest, embracing as her mantra the importance of education and thrift as a way forward for herself and other descendants of slavery; subsequently, she has dedicated herself to furthering education among children and youth for more than 75 years; and

WHEREAS, This distinguished woman has experienced the incredible joys and sorrows characteristic of and reserved for those with the stamina and courage to savor a full life; and

WHEREAS, Odell Ross left the small town of Hurdles Mill, North Carolina in her mid-20s to seek her fortune in the Northeast; she initially landed in New Jersey and soon found employment in Kearney as a welder in the shipyard working on ships commissioned for overseas duty during

World War II; and

WHEREAS, Odell Ross then migrated to Manhattan, New York, taking a position as a seamstress in the garment district making clothes for infants and toddlers; while employed in Manhattan, she visited the upstate town of Newburgh and fell in love with its scenic and small town charm; and

WHEREAS, Through her attendance at the AME Methodist Church of Newburgh, Odell Ross easily made friends with other people of color; these friends and her faith provided an anchor for her in the community and the friendships became lasting friendships which she has maintained throughout the years; she became a member of the AME Zion Methodist Church and has been a member for more than six decades; and

WHEREAS, Upon moving to Newburgh, Odell Ross was soon employed as a nanny for two children, a position she held more than 20 years; and

WHEREAS, A true asset to her community, Odell Ross worked tirelessly to support educational opportunity for her kin and other children; she used her first car to give back to the community, exposing local children to the cultural events surrounding them; and

WHEREAS, Almost on a weekly basis, Odell Ross would take these children to such excursions as the Catskill Game Farm, Warwick Game Farm, Sterling Forest Gardens, Broadway plays, museums, Florida, New York, onion farms, and surrounding fruit and garden farms; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, recently in her 90s, Odell Ross served as a loving "Grandmother" in the Head Start Program of Newburgh, New York; and

WHEREAS, A loyal and faithful member of the AME Methodist Church, Odell Ross continues to sing in its Senior Choir; and

WHEREAS, This beloved woman has enriched the lives of those around her through her joyous and sincere love for others and through the quiescent charm and wisdom which comes only from a fullness of years; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to publicly recog-

nize those who have reached such a remarkable age and who have witnessed and celebrated the innovations, cultural developments and awesome achievements of this country during the last century, while themselves contributing to the growth and excellence of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Odell Ross upon the occasion of her 100th Birthday; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Odell Ross.