

2015-J6175

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Connie Kopelov, women's labor educator and LGBT advocate

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to those individuals whose dedicated public service and advocacy have contributed to the well-being of their community and the entire State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov passed away on Saturday, May 28, 2016, in New York City, at the age of 90; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov was born on April 14, 1926, in Kokomo, Indiana, to Russian Jewish parents who immigrated to the United States; and

WHEREAS, At the time of her death and for many decades prior, Connie Kopelov was a resident of Manhattan; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov earned a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and a master's degree from Goddard College for her thesis "Trade Union Women and Women's Rights"; and

WHEREAS, In the 1950s, Connie Kopelov served as the Executive Director of the New York City Freedom Agenda, addressing issues of civil liberties; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov worked tirelessly throughout her career to advocate on behalf of organized labor and to better recognize women's labor; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov taught courses on women's labor history at Cornell University and New York University; and

WHEREAS, Among the numerous positions Connie Kopelov held were the Associate National Education Director for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the Director of Education for the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, and the Vice President of the New York City Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW); and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov's work has been recognized and honored with the National Organization for Women's New York City Chapter Susan B. Anthony Award, as well as the New York Labor History Association's John Commerford Labor Education Award; and

WHEREAS, While working at Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), Connie Kopelov met Phyllis Siegel who would later be her wife; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov and Phyllis Siegel were partners for 23 years before being able to legally marry; and

WHEREAS, On July 24, 2011, Connie Kopelov and Phyllis Siegel became the first same sex couple to be legally married in New York City; and

WHEREAS, In 2012 Connie Kopelov and Phyllis Siegel served as the Grand Marshals for the New York City Pride Parade; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov is survived by her wife, Phyllis Siegel, and her sister, Deborah Dorosin; and

WHEREAS, Connie Kopelov will be missed by her family and all who knew her, and the mark she left on all of our lives will never leave; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Connie Kopelov; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Connie Kopelov.