

## 2017-J639

Senate Resolution No. 639

BY: Senator COMRIE

COMMENDING The Fortune Society upon the occasion  
of celebrating its 50th Anniversary on April 17,  
2017

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, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend The Fortune Society upon the occasion of celebrating its 50th Anniversary at its Spring event on Monday, April 17, 2017, at The City Winery, in New York, New York; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Neil Barsky, Founder and Chairman of The Marhsall Project, and Richard Feldman, President of the SHS Foundation, will be recognized for their steadfast and unremitting commitment to their communities; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1967, The Fortune Society's strives to foster a world where all who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated will thrive as positive, contributing members of society; and

WHEREAS, This vital organization's continuum of care, informed and implemented by professionals with cultural backgrounds and life experiences similar to those of their clients, helps ensure their success; and

WHEREAS, Today, The Fortune Society serves approximately 6,000 individuals annually via three New York City locations: their service

center in Long Island City, Queens, and both the Fortune Academy ("the Castle") and Castle Gardens in West Harlem; their program models are recognized, nationally and internationally, for their quality and innovation; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, The Fortune Society launched the David Rothenberg Center for Public Policy (DRCPP) in honor of The Fortune Society's founder, a tireless advocate for the rights and fair treatment of people with criminal records; and

WHEREAS, While The Fortune Society has always engaged in advocacy and community education, DRCPP resourced and ramped up The Fortune Society's policy development, advocacy, technical assistance, training, and community education efforts; and

WHEREAS, DRCPP leverages The Fortune Society's internal expertise, including the life experience of their formerly incarcerated staff and clients and their first-hand experiences as a direct reentry service provider, to advocate for a fairer criminal justice system, promote effective program models and needed supports for people with criminal justice histories, and change the counterproductive laws and policies that create barriers to successful community reentry following involvement in the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, For 50 years, The Fortune Society has helped build people's lives by changing minds through education and advocacy to promote the creation of a fair, humane and truly rehabilitative correctional system; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when 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 commend The Fortune Society upon the occasion of celebrating its 50th Anniversary on April 17, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Fortune Society.