

2017-J1945

Senate Resolution No. 1945

BY: Senator MONTGOMERY

HONORING The Reverend Sharon E. Codner-Walker upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Sojourner Truth Award by The Brooklyn Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. on April 29, 2017

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 honor The Reverend Sharon E. Codner-Walker upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Sojourner Truth Award by The Brooklyn Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., to be celebrated at its 50th Annual Founders' Day Observance Luncheon on Saturday, April 29, 2017, at Gargiulos Restaurant in Brooklyn, New York; and

WHEREAS, The theme for this auspicious occasion is entitled "72 Years of L.E.T.S. - Leaders Exemplary Timeless Service; Marching forward with a purpose"; each year, The Brooklyn Club acknowledges its Founders; "the shoulders on which we stand and the role and responsibility we have to prepare our young people for the future"; and

WHEREAS, The Brooklyn Club is a chapter of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. (NANBPWC, Inc.), which provides opportunities for women to increase their leadership

skills, experience governance and parliamentary procedures, and enhance their educational awareness of issues impacting the black community through volunteerism; and

WHEREAS, Each year, the Sojourner Truth Award recognizes an outstanding African American Woman, who best exemplifies the ideals of the Club's Matriarch, Sojourner Truth; Reverend Sharon E. Codner-Walker is truly deserving of this prestigious award; and

WHEREAS, A native of Jamaica, West Indies, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker grew up in Brooklyn, New York; as an inspiring spiritual leader, she tirelessly serves as an advocate for those with a diminished voice, as friend to the friendless, counselor to the broken, battered, discarded and the lost; and

WHEREAS, In 1987, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker realized that she had been called to serve people, whether in churches, hospitals, shelters, soup kitchens or on street corners; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker's Christian education and ministerial leadership was cultivated at both the Baptist Church of the Redeemer, and at the New Cornerstone Christian Church in Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker attended local public schools in Brooklyn; after graduation, she earned her bachelor's degree in Human Services and Professional Studies with concentrations in Counseling and Psychology; and

WHEREAS, She continued her education by obtaining her master's degree in Education and a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary where she graduated with honors and was bestowed The Maxwell Fellowship Award for Excellence in ministry; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker began her distinguished career as a Clinical Hospital Chaplain at Brookdale Hospital, New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center, and at the Hospital for Special Surgery In New York City; and

WHEREAS, Throughout her many years of ministry and community services, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker has served in numerous leadership roles including Counselor and Director of HIV/AIDS Education Programs for "At Risk Teens"; Coordinator for "The Fishes and Loaves Ministry", an outreach ministry meeting the physical and spiritual needs of individuals and families in Brooklyn and in Harlem, now serving hundreds of families one night a week; Youth and Adolescence Pastor at new churches; Deacon and Coordinator of Battered Women's Ministries; Bereavement and Grief Counselor for lay and professional persons; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker has always been available to help those people dealing with loss and tragedy; as a Debriefing Trauma Specialist, she counseled individuals who had been deeply impacted by the horrific events which occurred on September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, In January 2010, immediately following the tragic earthquake in Haiti, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker spearheaded SUNY Downstate Medical Center's Spiritual Care Community Outreach and support to the Haitian community with assistance through the office of the Bishop affiliated with some of Brooklyn's largest Roman Catholic Churches; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker's outreach and supportive counseling services included providing spiritual and emotional care, and crisis debriefing at local Catholic churches, on street corners, the Caton Market Place, Barbershops, Subway stations and in the Chapel at Downstate Medical Center; she also memorialized parents and children of the medical and professional staff as well as the community at large to assist them with closure; and

WHEREAS, Currently, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker is a vital member of the Northeastern Regional Committees/Commission on the Ministry, where she serves as a Pastoral caregiver and mentor for seminarians and those in "Watch Care" discerning their call to ministry; and

WHEREAS, This extraordinary woman also holds the position of Senior Pastor of the United Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Brooklyn,

and the Clinical Board Certified Chaplain, Director of the Departments of Pastoral/Spiritual Care and Volunteer Services at SUNY Downstate Medical Center-University Hospital of Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, For her stellar leadership, unrelenting compassion, and unwavering stance for justice for all, Reverend Sharon Codner-Walker has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the Valiant Woman Award by the Church Women United in Brooklyn, Inc.; The Outstanding Clergy Service Award; the Brooklyn's Woman of Valor; the Service Excellence Award; and the SUNY Downstate Extraordinary Woman and Employee Recognition Award; she was also named a "Hero for Haiti"; and

WHEREAS, With her throughout have been her husband of 20 years, Donald Walker; and their daughter, Leah, both of whom have shown her love and support and rejoice in her many achievements; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the quality of life in their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to the maintenance of high standards in their profession, certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor The Reverend Sharon E. Codner-Walker upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Sojourner Truth Award by The Brooklyn Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Reverend Sharon E. Codner-Walker.