

2019-J1553

Senate Resolution No. 1553

BY: Senator PARKER

HONORING Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson upon the occasion of their designation for special recognition by the Brooklyn Academy of Music on May 24, 2019

WHEREAS, Individuals who give of their time and energies and serve the best interests of their communities are an asset beyond remuneration and cannot be sufficiently extolled; and

WHEREAS, Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson have given not only of their time and energies but also of their competence, intelligence and leadership and consequently have been designated for special honor; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson upon the occasion of their designation for special recognition by the Brooklyn Academy of Music at its DanceAfrica program on Friday, May 24, 2019; and

WHEREAS, DanceAfrica is Brooklyn Academy of Music's (BAM) longest running program and America's largest celebration of African and African-American dance, music, and culture; created in 1977, under the artistic direction of Founding Elder Chuck Davis and with the aim of heightening awareness of African culture, the festival has evolved into a beloved annual Memorial Day weekend event which brings the entire community together; and

WHEREAS, Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson were born and raised in New York; and

WHEREAS, Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson earned a degree in administration and went into a career in banking, however, she had been a dancer since the age of 13 and continued dancing into adulthood; and

WHEREAS, After studying aeronautical engineering, Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson was introduced to African drumming by a neighbor; his love for the drum quickly grew and he began drumming in earnest while studying at Bernice Johnson Dance Studio in Jamaica, New York; and

WHEREAS, It was at Bernice Johnson Dance Studio that their two paths crossed in 1967, and the couple married just one year later; and

WHEREAS, As Dancer and Drummer, Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson were founding members of both the original Chuck Davis Dance Company and the inaugural DanceAfrica performance in 1977; and

WHEREAS, Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson transitioned to a vocal performance career and stayed close to home to raise their three children Moremi, Akinwale, and Imani; Baba continued drumming and went on to perform at venues to include FesTAC, the Richard Pryor Show, and the World's Fair Guinea Pavilion; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, they both performed as vocal artists with Milton Cardona and Eya Aranla at various global venues to include the Berlin Jazz Festival and Earth Celebration in Sado, Japan; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson have devoted themselves to projects close to their hearts, including The Underground Railroad Quilt Project and the Source Farm in St. Thomas, Jamaica; and

WHEREAS, Throughout their lives as priests of the Yoruba tradition and pillars of the community, Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson have initiated several god children and poured their time, energy, and love into countless others; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by

individuals for the benefit of others which Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson have displayed throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS, It has always been the objective of this Legislative Body to honor and support those individuals who have displayed their commitment to the betterment of their communities, and it is the intent of this Legislative Body to inscribe upon its records, this tribute to Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson, that future generations may know and appreciate their admirable character, their many benevolent deeds, and the respect and esteem in which they are held by their peers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson upon the occasion of their designation for special recognition by the Brooklyn Academy of Music on May 24, 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Baba John Yomi Awolawo Robinson and Iya Carole Awolawo Robinson.