

2021-J992

Senate Resolution No. 992

BY: Senator BRESLIN

HONORING Rabbi Paul Sifton upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Pillars of the Community Award by the Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to acknowledge outstanding individuals whose professional lives, personal endeavors, and community service are an example and inspiration to their colleagues, friends, family, and community; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Rabbi Paul Sifton upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Pillars of the Community Award by the Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center to be celebrated virtually on Sunday, April 18, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Each year, this prestigious awards ceremony recognizes individuals for their contributions to the Center and the Jewish community-at-large by acting as moral pillars and dispensers of wisdom and advice, providing continued service and leadership, and acting generously in the spirit of Tzedakah; and

WHEREAS, Widely known for his extraordinary dedication to Israel and

the local community, Rabbi Paul Silton's philanthropic and leadership endeavors continue to inspire all of those who are lucky enough to know him; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, Rabbi Paul Silton was recruited by Temple Israel to be its education, camp and youth director; he also served as co-director of the communal high school, retiring as Rabbi Emeritus of the synagogue in 2008; and

WHEREAS, During his years at Temple Israel, Rabbi Paul Silton expanded the Herman and Libby Michelson nursery school to the Herman and Libby Michelson Early Childhood Center; in addition to increasing the center's hours and establishing the Toddler Program to assist working families, he introduced the Hebrew Immersion Program into both the Early Childhood Center and the religious school; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, to accommodate the longer hours and increased attendance in the Early Childhood Center, he enlarged, enhanced and beautified the playground, encouraged the ultimate certification of the center, and found a new location for the library on the St. Peter side of the building; and

WHEREAS, One of the most outstanding and inspiring of the Rabbi Paul Silton's achievement was the Yorn Kippur Shofar of Freedom Award ceremony; for more than 18 years, he brought world famous Righteous Gentiles to Temple Israel, including Heroes and Heroines of the Holocaust and post-Holocaust who risked their lives to save Jewish lives; in their honor, he adorned the entrance to the synagogue with their names; and

WHEREAS, Deeply involved in social action, Rabbi Paul Silton was an

active participant in the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue and housed the second interfaith service at Temple Israel; in reaction to the hearing of accused war criminal Viles Hazner in 1979, he founded Holocaust Survivors and Friends in Pursuit of Justice; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Paul Silton expanded Temple Israel's dance program, opening up the Israeli dance experience for all; to enhance the High Holiday religious experience, he reintroduced the choir under the professional leadership of Anna Dubrova who had won many awards for her choral work in the former Soviet Union; to further improve the quality of the choir, he brought in professional voices from the Albany Promusica and arranged for an annual concert; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Paul Silton has been written up in several books, including The Outraged Conscience by Rochelle Saide! Wolk; Out of Passau by Anna Rasmus; A Day Apart by Christopher Ringwald; and Temple of Diamonds by Chaim Picker; in his retirement, he completed the study of the entire Talmud and recently completed his own first book NITZHUNI BANAI, Laughing with God, Perpetuating Tora Through Humor and Learning; and

WHEREAS, As Director of Camp Givah for many years, Rabbi Paul Silton was responsible for the construction of the Camp Givah Lake (Yam Sarah), where he was instrumental in the addition of the Kibbutz Program, a Red Cross certified course in canoeing, sailing, fishing, computers, gymnastics, horseback riding and pony rides; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout has been his wife, Faye, and their seven children, as well as 27 grandchildren, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by

individuals for the benefit of others which Rabbi Paul Sifton has displayed throughout his life; 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 Rabbi Paul Sifton, that future generations may know and appreciate his admirable character, his many benevolent deeds, and the respect and esteem in which he is held by his peers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Rabbi Paul Sifton upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Pillars of the Community Award by the Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Rabbi Paul Sifton.