

2021-J2648

Senate Resolution No. 2648

BY: Senator MAYER

COMMEMORATING the 75th Anniversary of the
Greenburgh Hebrew Center

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to commend those organizations that work to serve the health care needs of citizens of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Greenburgh Hebrew Center which was celebrated on January 28, 2022; and

WHEREAS, The Greenburgh Hebrew Center (GHC) is a vibrant egalitarian Conservative Jewish community in Westchester County which embraces tradition while actively participating in the changing world; and

WHEREAS, The organization also focuses on building a family-like community of social connectedness, educating children, themselves, and the members of its community, engaging in the changing world, providing for the future, and embracing tradition, religion, and spirituality; and

WHEREAS, The Greenburgh Hebrew Center was founded on January 28, 1947, with approximately 20 families attending the first meeting; the families were primarily from the Rivertowns, which was the focus of the founding members; its membership has since expanded to include Yonkers,

Scarsdale, White Plains, and other surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, All business and social meetings were held in the American Legion Hall in Dobbs Ferry until April 19, 1949, when the GHC acquired the property located at 515 Broadway, its current location; the building, which was originally part of the Tyre Estate, was remodeled to house the Sunday School, sanctuary, offices, and a home for the caretaker; and

WHEREAS, With education as a pillar of the GHC, the first Sunday School classes were held in September of 1948, with 15 children in attendance; in 1952, a kindergarten group and the Dobbs Ferry Nursery School were created; its current Early Childcare Center is now the successor of that first nursery school; and

WHEREAS, During GHC's formative years, social activities were an important feature of synagogue life; Sisterhood, also known as the Women's Guild, was founded in 1948; the Men's Club was organized in 1952; both groups serve as means to form lifelong friendships and have historically been important fundraising groups for GHC; and

WHEREAS, Due to increased membership, the GHC needed a larger space, and as a result, a fundraising campaign was initiated in 1956 to raise money for the construction of a new building; it culminated in the dedication of a new building in September of 1959; the new building housed the sanctuary, ballroom, and offices, and was attached to the original building which remained; and

WHEREAS, Benefiting from an inclusive community, in 1981, the first woman held the office of GHC President, paving the way for the many other women who have since successfully held that esteemed position; furthermore, GHC is an egalitarian congregation where women can

participate equally in religious services and operations; and

WHEREAS, In the late 1980s, Greenburgh went through another expansion where the original building was demolished, and a new structure was erected; GHC's new building would go on to serve the religious school and early childcare operations, as well as providing additional office space for the clergy, teachers, and other staff; and

WHEREAS, During the past 25 years, GHC has become more concerned with the environment, attaching solar panels to their building, composting, and participating as a member of the Hazon "Seal of Sustainability" program, which certifies a Jewish organization's commitment to sustainable values and practices, regarding its food and environmental practices, waste and energy practices, and impact on climate change; and

WHEREAS, In 2004, Midchester Jewish Center of Yonkers merged with GHC to form a larger, stronger, and more viable Jewish Community; and

WHEREAS, Today, this vital congregation welcomes and includes people from all walks of life, including singles and families, traditional, interfaith, blended, and LGBTQ+ people; the organization is accessible to those with special needs, providing large prayer books, wheelchair access and amplification devices for the hearing impaired; and

WHEREAS, For the past 75 years, GHC has carried out a long and proud tradition of "Tikkun Olam," defined as acts of kindness performed to perfect or repair the world; this has included feeding and clothing the homeless, as well as participating in programs such as "The Midnight Run"; and

WHEREAS, It is with great pleasure that this Legislative Body

acknowledges this exceptional organization and its vibrant role in improving the quality of life in its community, and in communities across the state, fully confident that it will continue to enjoy the sparkling successes it has experienced thus far; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Greenburgh Hebrew Center; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Greenburgh Hebrew Center.