

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 140th Anniversary of Lenox Road Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated on Sunday, November 25, 2012

WHEREAS, Religious institutions, and the many spiritual, social and educational benefits they confer, play a vital role in the development of the moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and this Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 140th Anniversary of Lenox Road Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated on Sunday, November 25, 2012; and

WHEREAS, The Lenox Road Baptist Church started as a prayer meeting in February of 1871, and had some of its first meetings in the Schoenmakers Hall, now 893 Flatbush Avenue; the church itself was formally organized on March 12, 1872, and publicly recognized as a regularly constituted Baptist Church on April 12, 1872; and

WHEREAS, The Lenox Road Baptist Church began as an all-white congregation in 1871, and continued so up to the early 1970s; the racial transition started during the early 1960s when there was a tremendous amount of social unrest; and

WHEREAS, The community and the church went through several demographic and socio-economic changes; many migrated from the southern states as well as from the Caribbean, Panama, British Virgin Islands, Costa Rica, Guyana, as well as other parts of the world; and

WHEREAS, During this period, housing and business ownership by the new immigrants changed the racial and ethnic composition of the community and the church; as more African Americans and Caribbean-Americans became members of the Lenox Road Baptist Church, the direction and focus of the church's ministries changed to a more socially oriented service; and

WHEREAS, On December 23, 1975, the 103-year-old landmark church was totally destroyed by fire; this event appeared to have been the catalyst that brought the "old" church and the emerging new membership to a new direction in doing ministry, and the rebuilding of the old church was the main thrust and motivation; and

WHEREAS, The community responded to the need of the church by providing a meeting place for Sunday services at the Grand Theatre; the membership continued to grow despite the fire, and the church called on its first African American minister in 1977; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, Lenox Road Baptist Church has had a total of 18 pastors including its current one, The Reverend Dr. Kirkpatrick G. Cohall; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous direction of The Reverend Dr. Kirkpatrick G. Cohall, the Lenox Road Baptist Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when religious institutions 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 commemorate the 140th Anniversary of Lenox Road Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, to be observed on Sunday, November 25, 2012, fully confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Reverend Dr. Kirkpatrick G. Cohall.

