

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Elombe Brath upon the occasion of his designation for special recognition after a lifetime of loyalty and distinguished service as a community, national and international civil and human rights leader

WHEREAS, A great community is only as great as those persons and organizations that provide exemplary service, whether through participation in voluntary programs, through unique personal achievement in their profession or other endeavors, or simply through a lifetime of good citizenship; Elombe Brath is one such individual; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Elombe Brath upon the occasion of his designation for special recognition after a lifetime of loyalty and distinguished service as a renowned activist, locally, nationally and internationally; and

WHEREAS, Born in Brooklyn, New York, on September 30, 1936, to parents who had immigrated to the United States from Barbados, the Caribbean Island geographically closest to the African continent, his early training of a political character was hearing his mother speak of her first cousin, Clennel Wickham who was the editor of the renowned HERALD newspaper; and

WHEREAS, In his autobiography, READY FOR REVOLUTION, the acclaimed revolutionary Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture) referred to Elombe Brath as the "dean of Harlem nationalists"; while such a tribute from Ture is admirable, Brath's Black Nationalism, his Pan-African thought, as many will attest, extends well beyond Harlem with a special resonance among freedom fighters around the globe; and

WHEREAS, Brath's political commitment evolved in 1956 simultaneously with the struggle to eliminate "Negro" as the nomenclature of African American people; from this moment of Black consciousness it was an easy and logical step for him to create the "Black is Beautiful" campaign (1961) following the creation of AJASS (African Jazz-Arts Society and Studios) with his brother, Kwame and a cadre of other local advocates in 1956; and

WHEREAS, Removing "Negro" from the lexicon, insisting on the beauty of Blackness, and refusing to accept the Eurocentric worldview, Elombe and his associates were in the vanguard of change as they launched the Granddassa Models and "Naturally Shows"; and

WHEREAS, All of these activities were the foundation for his total involvement in African affairs, including his association with FOPANO (Federation of Pan-African Nationalist Organizations), which eventually set the stage for African Liberation Day and the development of the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) which played such a critical role in educating and organizing thousands in the fight against imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism on the African continent; and

WHEREAS, One of the pivotal moments in Elombe's constantly evolving political philosophy, an outlook grounded in the ideas and actions promoted by Marcus Garvey and Carlos Cooks, was the formation of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition (PLC) in 1975; and

WHEREAS, The PLC came at a most propitious time when there was much confusion about which liberation movement to support in the war against colonial domination in Africa; it was a matter of separating the truly progressive organizations from the reactionary ones, and Elombe and members of the PLC were indispensable in providing the correct guidance and understanding of the often fractious and contentious forces vying for control; and

WHEREAS, For more than a generation Elombe, as the chairman of PLC, helped to coordinate hundreds of forums with the purpose of educating the masses, not only about the struggle in Africa but also about the

conditions oppressed people faced all over the world; and

WHEREAS, Despite his total immersion on the international front as well as countless battles against racism at home, Elombe was employed at WABC-TV where as a graphic artist, skills he had acquired in high school and at the School of Visual Arts, he was a vital consultant, particularly on African affairs, to Gil Noble, the esteemed host of "Like It Is"; Elombe was instrumental in facilitating the presence of many of the African leaders on the show; and

WHEREAS, None of these activities, however, detracted Elombe from taking care of his family, and along with his wife, Nomsa, they raised six very successful young men, and a daughter; and

WHEREAS, Many of Elombe's followers and comrades admit missing their leader who was always burdened down with the books, magazines and newspapers, always ready to dispense with the latest information on social and political matters, both at home and abroad, and always ready to stand his ground; and

WHEREAS, Though stilled by a massive stroke, Elombe's legacy, his inspiration remains as significant today as it did when his voice was a clarion call advising individuals along the right path to total liberation and independence; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by an individual for the benefit of others which Elombe Brath has displayed throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, Those who enhance the well-being and vitality of their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of the community, the State, the Nation, and the world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Elombe Brath upon the occasion of his designation for special recognition after a lifetime of loyalty and distinguished service as a community, national and international civil and human rights leader; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Elombe Brath.