

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending Marian Wright Edelman upon the occasion of being honored in conjunction with Women's History Month 2014 in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those women of achievement within the Empire State who have made strong contributions to their communities and who inspire others through their model citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Marian Wright Edelman upon the occasion of being honored in conjunction with Women's History Month 2014 in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made invaluable contributions to the growth and strength of New York State in countless recorded and unrecorded ways; and

WHEREAS, Each year, the State of New York officially sets aside time to recognize the achievements and lives of these exemplary women, representatives of the wide-ranging and vital roles women have played in the historic development of this great Empire State and its communities; the theme of this year's commemoration is "Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment"; and

WHEREAS, Marian Edelman is a lifelong advocate for disadvantaged Americans and is the President of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF); under her leadership, CDF has become the nation's strongest voice for children and families; and

WHEREAS, CDF's Leave No Child Behind mission is to ensure every child a healthy start, a head start, a fair start, a safe start and a moral start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities; and

WHEREAS, Marian Edelman, a graduate of Spelman College and Yale Law School, began her career in the mid 1960s when, as the first black woman admitted to the Mississippi Bar, she directed the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund office in Jackson, Mississippi; in 1968, she moved to Washington, D.C. and was counsel for the Poor People's Campaign that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. began organizing before his death; and

WHEREAS, Marian Edelman founded the Washington Research Project, a public interest law firm and the parent body of the Children's Defense Fund; for two years, she served as the Director of the Center for Law and Education at Harvard University and in 1973 began CDF; and

WHEREAS, Marian Edelman served on the Board of Trustees of Spelman College, which she chaired from 1976 to 1987, and was the first woman elected by alumni as a member of the Yale University Corporation on which she served from 1971 to 1977; she has received over a hundred honorary degrees and many awards, including the Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Prize, the Heinz Award and a MacArthur Foundation Prize Fellowship; and

WHEREAS, In 2000, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, and the Robert F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award for her writings which include: FAMILIES IN PERIL: AN AGENDA FOR SOCIAL CHANGE; THE MEASURES OF OUR SUCCESS: A LETTER TO MY CHILDREN AND YOURS; GUIDE MY FEET: MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS ON LOVING AND WORKING FOR CHILDREN; STAND FOR CHILDREN; LANTERNS: A MEMOIR OF MENTORS; HOLD MY HAND: PRAYERS FOR BUILDING A MOVEMENT TO LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND; I'M YOUR CHILD, GOD: PRAYERS FOR OUR CHILDREN; I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: A TREASURY TO INSPIRE OUR CHILDREN; and THE SEA IS SO WIDE AND MY BOAT IS SO SMALL: CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION; and

WHEREAS, Marian Edelman is a board member of the Robin Hood Foundation, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, the Association to

Benefit Children, and is a member of the Selection Committee of the Profiles in Courage Award of the John F. Kennedy Library, the Council of Foreign Relations, the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences; and

WHEREAS, With her throughout have been her husband, Peter, and their three sons, Joshua, Jonah and Ezra, as well as their four grandchildren, Ellika, Zoe, Elijah and Levi, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of her life and rejoice in her achievements; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to express its highest admiration for Marian Edelman and to wish her continued success in all of her future endeavors; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Marian Wright Edelman upon the occasion of being honored in conjunction with Women's History Month 2014 in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Marian Wright Edelman.