

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Vera House upon the occasion of celebrating its 19th Annual White Ribbon Campaign

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those institutions within our community that help to protect community members and educate the public on issues of importance to everyone; and

WHEREAS, Primary among such institutions are those who, year after year, diligently seek to empower those in need, promote a culture of equality and respect, and assist families in crisis; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to commend Vera House upon the occasion of celebrating its 19th Annual White Ribbon Campaign, recognizing its importance to our community and the integral role this fine institution has played in the lives of so many; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, Vera House was established in Syracuse, New York; it was formed by Sister Mary Vera, CSJ, who, together with a group of concerned citizens, saw a need in the community to provide an emergency shelter and services for women in crisis; and

WHEREAS, What began in 1977 with modest services for women has greatly expanded; and

WHEREAS, Today, the mission of Vera House is to end all domestic and sexual violence, to assist families in crisis, to support those affected by domestic and sexual violence to live safe, self-sufficient lives, to empower women and children, and to promote a culture of equality and respect in relationships; and

WHEREAS, On January 1, 2005, Vera House merged with the Syracuse Rape Crisis Center to combine programs and staff in order to provide quality services "together for hope and healing"; and

WHEREAS, The many services offered by Vera House include: outreach and advocacy services, domestic violence education programming, children's counseling services, the Syracuse Area Domestic Violence Coalition, and a domestic violence education program for male perpetrators of violence; and

WHEREAS, This year 2013 marks the 19th consecutive year that Vera House has conducted its White Ribbon Campaign; and

WHEREAS, The White Ribbon Campaign traces its roots to Canada where, on December 6, 1989, an enraged gunman roamed the corridors of Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique for 45 minutes and killed 14 women; and

WHEREAS, The incident, which became known as the Montreal Massacre, became a galvanizing moment in which mourning turned into outrage towards violence against women; and

WHEREAS, The shootings raised male awareness about violence against women, which had formerly been viewed as a "woman's issue"; and

WHEREAS, The White Ribbon Campaign began in Canada on December 6, 1990, the first anniversary of the Montreal Massacre; and

WHEREAS, The Campaign is led by concerned men who invite all members of the community to wear a ribbon to help end domestic and sexual abuse; and

WHEREAS, The goal of the Campaign is to raise awareness among men and community members of violence against women, and to support organizations that deal with the consequences of men's violence against women; and

WHEREAS, Vera House brought the White Ribbon Campaign to Syracuse from Canada and conducted its first campaign in 1995; and

WHEREAS, From April 12 through April 21, 2013, thousands of Central New Yorkers will wear a white ribbon or wristband, as a promise to the

community that there is no excuse for abuse; and

WHEREAS, By wearing a white ribbon during the Campaign, men acknowledge the important role they must play in the effort to end violence against women; and

WHEREAS, During the Campaign, thousands of individuals in the Syracuse community are hard at work raising both funds and awareness to support Vera House; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Vera House upon the occasion of celebrating its 19th Annual White Ribbon Campaign, and to recognize its staff and volunteers as they undertake the White Ribbon Campaign and give full endorsement to Vera House and the effort to eliminate domestic abuse; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Randi Bregman, Executive Director, Vera House.