

BY: Senator KENNEDY

COMMEMORATING the 15th Anniversary of the Buffalo
Gay Men's Chorus

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those musical organizations that have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the great 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 15th Anniversary of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus (BGMC) was founded in 1999, with the help of Roger Parris, who is still one of their singers; over the course of the year, a group of men diligently worked to make the organization a reality; and

WHEREAS, In May of 2001, auditions were held, and 50 members were selected for the initial group; rehearsals began on September 11, 2001, the day of the tragic World Trade Center terrorist attacks; under the direction of Barbara Wagner, the singers chose to celebrate life and hope and heartily sang "How Can I Keep From Singing?" together; and

WHEREAS, To this day, the hymn is still used as the chorus' theme song; the stirring song serves as a reminder for its members of mutual family togetherness and inspiration that the BGMC always aspires to attain; and

WHEREAS, On February 9, 2002, BGMC's first public concert, "Music From the Heart" was held at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the years, BGMC has been repeatedly named the Best Local Choral Group by **Artvoice**; on two occasions, the talented chorus was asked to sing with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra at the Kleinhans Music Hall; and

WHEREAS, For its excellence in music and its dedication to its community, BGMC has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the ESPA Award for Community Service by the Empire State Pride Agenda; and

WHEREAS, In addition, BGMC received the Buffalo and Erie County Arts Council Award for exceptional contributions to the arts and cultural community in Western New York in March of 2008; and

WHEREAS, The arts, in whatever form depicted, are central to human expression; they are truly a universal language and their contribution to the development of friendship and understanding among all peoples cannot be overestimated; and

WHEREAS, The history, the heritage, and the lives of the people of all countries and all cultures are portrayed in their music; the art and act of sharing them enriches us altogether; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body that when musical societies of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be 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 15th Anniversary of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus.