

BY: Senator BRESLIN

MOURNING the death of Mary Jane Smith, founder of Unity House, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Mary Jane Smith of Saratoga Springs, New York died on Monday, January 16, 2017 at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, Mary Jane Smith devoted her life to serving others; over the last half century with Unity House, she has had a profound impact on thousands of people living in and around Troy, New York; and

WHEREAS, Unity House, one of the area's largest community service organizations, is a large human services agency which provides a wide range of services to meet the otherwise unmet needs of people in the community who are hurting and struggling; and

WHEREAS, Mary Jane Smith's commitment to excellence, and her spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, As Executive Director of Unity House for 20 years, Mary Jane Smith developed programs for people in poverty, adults living with mental illness, victims of domestic violence and children with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, This strong-willed woman, committed to advocating for social justice, worked with people to cut through the red tape of the social welfare system and prodded landlords to maintain housing for lower-income people; she also sought jobs for people with limited skills; and

WHEREAS, Even after her retirement in 1991, Mary Jane Smith served on many boards which benefitted not only the disadvantaged in the Capital Region but also the community at large and the mental health population of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Consummate advocate for the less fortunate, Mary Jane spent her life making others' lives better; countless families and individuals benefitted from her compassion and vision; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Mary Jane Smith leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all she served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Mary Jane Smith, founder of Unity House, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Mary Jane Smith.