

BY: M. of A. Cahill

CONGRATULATING Annette Finestone upon the occasion of celebrating her 100th Birthday

WHEREAS, Senior citizens bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the increasingly active roles they play in today's society; their past contributions and future participation are a vital part of and valuable asset to the fabric of community life and activity; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate Annette Finestone upon the occasion of celebrating her 100th Birthday; and

WHEREAS, Annette Chait was born on March 25, 1917, in the Bronx, New York, to Alexander (Sasha) and Sara Chait, known revolutionaries and community activists; when she was just under a year-old, she moved to Accord, New York, in the Hudson Valley where her parents opened Chaits Hotel and Bungalow Colony four years later; and

WHEREAS, Attending grade and high school in New York City and Hunter College, Annette Chait graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1941, with a degree in political science; and

WHEREAS, Returning to New York City after graduation, Annette Chait was a typist for the War Production Board during World War II; after the war she was assigned to Japan where she served as head of the personnel service for the United States War Department; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Annette Chait worked for the New York State Employment Department after the war as an interviewer and placement officer for returning soldiers; and

WHEREAS, Annette Chait met her husband Max Finestone in 1951, and they were married in 1954; after their marriage they moved to Accord, New York, to assist Annette's parents in operating Chaits Hotel; and

WHEREAS, Upon the passing of her father in 1956, Annette and Max Finestone purchased Chaits Hotel and owned and operated the hotel until 1978; and

WHEREAS, Upon selling the hotel business in 1978, Annette Finestone's husband found a bag containing rolls of her film from Japan while rummaging through old items; she had taken a job in Nagoya, Japan in 1945, a short time after the bombing of Hiroshima; and

WHEREAS, The Japan that Annette Finestone came upon less than six months after its destruction and surrender was entirely foreign from her own experience growing up on her father's Chaits Hotel property outside of Accord, New York; and

WHEREAS, These forgotten photos of street scenes capturing the devastation of 1940s Japan along with slides which Annette Finestone discovered among her possessions have since been displayed throughout local art exhibits in the United States and in Japan, including three events in the last decade, and inspired Annette Finestone to continue to take photographs; she attended SUNY Ulster and spent several years taking courses in photography and perfecting techniques in developing film; and

WHEREAS, Upon her retirement in 1988, Annette Finestone traveled throughout the United States; she participated in the Woman's Convoy to Central America, a trip promoting international women's solidarity; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone and her husband Max traveled the world during their time together; these trips were a huge part of her enjoyment of and interest in life and other cultures; they took their last international trip to Nicaragua in 2008, moving to Woodland Pond later that year; and

WHEREAS, On September 3, 2003, the Honorable Maurice D. Hinchey delivered a stirring tribute to Annette Finestone's beloved husband Max at the House of Representatives to honor his 81st birthday; noted was his lifelong fight for social justice, equal opportunity education and protection of the natural environment all of which Annette championed as well; also noted was Max's testimony nearly 64 years ago before Senator Joseph McCarthy defending his own rights of free speech, thought and assembly upon his being accused of being un-American; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone was recently the celebrated model for a bronze sculpture, titled "Aging Woman," to be sited at the County Fairgrounds in New Paltz, New York, previously the site of the Ulster County Poorhouse between 1828 and 1976; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone currently resides at the Woodland Pond Retirement Center in New Paltz where she recently took part in "One Billion Rising", a worldwide mass action event intended to mobilize people to end violence against women; she has been a staunch advocate all her life for such causes as economic justice, environmental awareness, women's rights and racial equality; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone was an active and vital member of the Woodland Pond Political Affairs Committee and is at the center of residential life at Woodland Pond; she is known by all and is an inspiration to all; her typical week includes bus trips, hosting guests for meals, participating in a variety of programs and enjoying her daily walks; the staff and residents at Woodland Pond feel privileged to join her in her 100th birthday celebration; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone, with her zest for life, has inspired and enhanced the lives of her family and friends; she is the loving mother of two daughters, Laura and Lisa and a son-in-law, David as well as the adoring grandmother of two grandchildren, Eva and Michael; she traveled to California in 2015 to attend Eva's wedding and in October 2016, welcomed her great-granddaughter Celine into the world; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone was designated for special recognition and honored by this Legislative body on March 25, 2007, on the occasion of her 90th birthday, an event that was celebrated in the summer of that year in conjunction with her husband Max Finestone's 85th birthday and their 55th wedding anniversary, self-proclaimed "Finestone Milestones"; and

WHEREAS, This exceptional centenarian has experienced the incredible joys and sorrows characteristic of and reserved for those with the stamina and courage to savor a full life; and

WHEREAS, Annette Finestone has enriched the lives of those around her through her joyous and sincere love for others and through the quiescent charm and wisdom which comes only from a fullness of years; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize those who have reached such a remarkable age and who have witnessed and celebrated the innovations, cultural developments and awesome achievements of this country during the last century, while themselves contributing to the growth and excellence of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Annette Finestone upon the occasion of celebrating her 100th Birthday; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Annette Finestone.