

BY: Senator PARKER

MOURNING the death of Jeanette Dowdell Garland,
distinguished citizen and devoted member of her
community

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who, through their selfless commitment and dedication, have served to better the quality of life in our community and have had a measurable positive impact on the lives of its residents; Jeanette Dowdell Garland was one such individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Jeanette Dowdell Garland, noting the significance of her purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Jeanette Dowdell Garland of Albany, New York, died on May 29, 2021 at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Affectionately known as Mom or Mama G to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as those within the local community, Jeanette Dowdell Garland always watched out for the youth in her neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Educated in the Albany City School District, Jeanette Dowdell Garland obtained her Associate Degree in Mortuary Science from Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, New York; upon the completion of her studies, she functioned as a partner in business, assisting her husband in the consolation of grief-stricken families within the African American community; in addition to performing administrative functions in the office, she prepared the makeup and attire on the dearly departed; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable woman was the first Black employee at Flah's Department Store; she also held positions at the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, Watervliet Arsenal, New York Telephone Company, and the Albany County Department of Social Services Heap Program; and

WHEREAS, A true asset to her community, Jeanette Dowdell Garland accepted a position with the City of Albany Parks and Recreation Department as Director of the Creighton Storey Teen Center, the esteemed position from which she retired after 22 years of dedicated service; and

WHEREAS, With a steadfast and unwavering commitment to her community, Jeanette Dowdell Garland volunteered for numerous civic and charitable community-based initiatives for the betterment of the African American experience in the Capital District Area; she was instrumental in securing scholarships for countless inner-city youth to attend Camp Thatcher, and also participated in the beautification of the City of Albany Initiative; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, she volunteered at the Albany Girls Club Inc. and the Grandmothers for Charter Schools, participating in various events, school board meetings, common council meetings, marches, holiday parties, and providing all the supplies and materials needed to make holiday wreaths; this extraordinary woman also canvassed for the opening of Green Tech High Charter School for Boys; and

WHEREAS, Spending a lifetime of giving to others to improve the quality of life for the African American community, as well as the entire City of Albany, and for her lifetime of service, Jeanette Dowdell Garland has been the proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including the Caregiver Award by the Women of Color Cancer Support group, South End Community Award, Frank Chapman Memorial Institute Inc. Mothers of Pearl Award, Albany City Common Council Black History Award and the Women of Color Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Award; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by her parents, Princie Mae and Romas; her daughter, Benita Elise; her son-in-law, Kenneth; her grandson, Gregory; four uncles and two aunts; her mother-in-law, Nana Grace; her father-in-law, William; and brother-in-law William Jr., Jeanette Dowdell Garland is survived by her husband of 65 years, Benjamin G. Garland; their children, Rodney (Sheila), Gregory (Inez), LaSone (Bernard), Lillian, Phillippa, and James; three godchildren; their grandchildren, Franziska, Bernard, Justin, Benjamin (Odaysia), Jennifer, William, Jeanette (Virkwan), Kymir, Keisha, Rodesha, Alyssa, Rodney, Ronald, Kiante, Phiana, Devonte, Rakeem, Zachary, Gage, and James; 19 great-grandchildren; five siblings, Rosemary, Ronald, Claudette, Carol, and Leila; two sisters-in-law, Mollie and Lillian; five nieces; four nephews; 12 grandnieces; five grandnephews; eight great-grandnephews; two great-grandnieces; four first cousins, Diana, Ellen, Betty and Daisy; and several lifelong friends, Johnnie, Jeannie, Joan, Mary, Shirley; as well as a host of other cousins and friends; and

WHEREAS, Jeanette Dowdell Garland's infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through her family's vivid and happy memories; her insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope to the countless lives she touched; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Jeanette Dowdell Garland leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing woman; she will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Jeanette Dowdell Garland, and to express its deepest condolences to her family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Jeanette Dowdell Garland.