

BY: Senator BRESLIN

HONORING Luz Marquez Benbow upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Jim Perry Progressive Leadership Award by Capital District Citizen Action on September 14, 2021

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Luz Marquez Benbow upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Jim Perry Progressive Leadership Award by Capital District Citizen Action to be celebrated at its 29th Annual Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at The Linda, WAMC's Performing Arts Studio, Albany, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Jim Perry Progressive Leadership Award honors the legacy of Jim Perry, a gay rights leader and founding member of the Capital District Chapter of Citizen Action of New York; his leadership role both in the Capital District and statewide was exemplary, and his dedication to politics and coalition building paved the way for the passage of Albany's Human Rights Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, It is with the memories of Jim Perry's actions and words that this vital organization recognizes those who have demonstrated a commitment to community activism and leadership; and

WHEREAS, Luz Marquez Benbow is being honored with this auspicious award for her role as one of the area's most dedicated, inspiring activists and leaders who has spent countless hours working to make her community a stronger, more just place to live; and

WHEREAS, Luz Marquez Benbow, who experienced a traumatic childhood, is guided by survivor leadership and working at the intersections of gender and race; and

WHEREAS, As a former Just Beginnings Collaborative Fellow from 2016-2019, Luz Marquez Benbow was able to focus on her Black Latinx community and formed the International Alianza de Mujeres Negrx (IamNegrx), a survivor network of Afro Latinx to advance policy and movement building toward ending child sexual abuse and sexual violence across the Diaspora; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, she co-organized three national gatherings of

Afrodescendant adult survivors during El Dia Internacional de la Mujer Afrolatinx, AfroCaribena y la Diaspora at Howard University in Washington, DC from 2016-2018; and

WHEREAS, Historically, this international day was founded by four Afrodominican sisters in the Dominican Republic in 1992 to address sexism and racism; and

WHEREAS, Utilizing this important celebration globally, Luz Marquez Benbow, along with five other survivor leaders and an ally envisioned honoring this day (El Dia July 25th) in the U.S by centering Afrolatinx survivors to discuss a taboo subject such as child sexual abuse and sexual violence within her own community; and

WHEREAS, Luz Marquez Benbow has been an anti-rape policy advocate since 1998, where she worked on statewide anti-sexual assault issues at the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, Luz Marquez Benbow co-founded the National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault (SCESA), the first national anti-sexual assault organization developed by and for Women of Color; and

WHEREAS, In her capacity as co-founder and Associate Director of SCESA, Luz Marquez Benbow led the policy efforts for the development of the Culturally Specific Grant program within the Violence Against Women Act in 2005 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, Luz Marquez Benbow spearheaded the policy efforts regarding the equitable distribution of violence against women resources in the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) of 2010, across the U.S Territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, U.S Virgin Islands and Northern Mariana Islands; and

WHEREAS, As a result, in 2010, Luz Marquez Benbow was present in the Oval Office to witness the signing of the reauthorization of FVPSA by then President Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, Locally in her beloved City of Troy, New York, Luz Marquez Benbow is one of the founders of Troy4BlackLives, a collective of organizers focused on police accountability and transparency who came together in 2017 after the non-fatal police shooting of Dahmeek McDonald and police killing of Edson Thevenin in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Luz Marquez Benbow is the proud mother of three children, raised in East Harlem and a first-generation Black Puerto Rican raised by a single mom who made the best pasteles sold at the NYC Puerto Rican Day Parade since 1979; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by an individual for the benefit of others which Luz Marquez Benbow has displayed throughout her life; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when

individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Luz Marquez Benbow upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Jim Perry Progressive Leadership Award by Capital District Citizen Action; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Luz Marquez Benbow.