

BY: Senator MAYER

COMMEMORATING the 25th Anniversary of
Rehabilitation Through Arts

WHEREAS, Individuals and organizations devoted to improving the quality of life for others, enabling them to build lives of dignity and self-worth are deserving of the highest praise and recognition; and

WHEREAS, From time to time, society calls upon these individuals and organizations to be recognized for the significance of their contributions and efforts to assist others in developing the skills necessary to be successful, productive citizens; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of Rehabilitation Through Arts to be celebrated with a Gala on Thursday, April 28, 2022, at the CV Rich Mansion in White Plains, New York; and

WHEREAS, Founded at Sing Sing Correctional Facility in 1996, Rehabilitation Through Arts (RTA) helps people in prison develop critical life skills through the arts, modeling an approach to the justice system based on human dignity rather than punishment; and

WHEREAS, With the current United States prison system being predominately based on punishment, more than half of all people released from prison are back within three years; this revolving door breaks down families and communities and costs taxpayers billions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, Offering a better approach, RTA's program is dynamic and richly varied, incorporating a wide range of art forms, including theatre, dance, music, creative writing, and visual arts; and

WHEREAS, Led by a steering committee of incarcerated members at each facility, RTA offers customized curricula, ranging from a one session master class in jazz guitar to a year-long project of script and character analysis; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, the RTA model provides an intensive, comprehensive arts program which builds critical life skills so people can meet the challenges of connecting with family and community when released; and

WHEREAS, This vital organization demonstrates that an approach based on human dignity is vastly more successful than one based on punishment; less than five percent of RTA members return to prison, compared to the national recidivism rate of 60 percent; and

WHEREAS, Over its distinguished 25-year history, RTA has demonstrated continuous service to the residents and communities which it serves; and

WHEREAS, The success of RTA is in direct correlation to the efforts of its dedicated staff, board, advisory council and volunteers, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors on behalf of the organization and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals and organizations 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 commemorate the 25th Anniversary of Rehabilitation Through Arts; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Rehabilitation Through Arts.