

BY: Senator COONEY

COMMEMORATING the 40th Anniversary of the
Rochester Gay Men's Chorus

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those musical organizations that have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus; and

WHEREAS, In November of 1982, five friends, David Knoll, Bob Olsowki, Kent Peterson, Ken Setera, and Nicholas Williams, created the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus to pursue a dream of using music to create an acceptance of social diversity and to use the harmony of voice to create a harmony of the spirit; and

WHEREAS, On the 18th of that month, the first rehearsal was held in Kent Peterson's living room, and six months later, on Saturday, May 7, 1983, the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus performed their first concert, entitled Rochester Gay Men's Chorus in Concert, at Calvary Street St. Andrews Church; and

WHEREAS, By then, the Chorus consisted of 18 singers; in addition to the original five members, they were joined by Lavern Doud, Steven Getz, Michael Holden, Steven Jarose, Chuck Kruppenbacher, David Merrill, Bill Metz, Pat Moran, Greg Partridge, John Rutkowski, David Skinner, John Strawway, Chuck Telier, and Del Titus; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the last four decades, the members of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus have continuously sung for themselves to make glorious music with friends who experience the world as we do and who share our joy in standing together; have sung for their sisters and brothers in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community to embody pride, family, and a sense of home; have sung for their friends and supporters who join with us to overcome ignorance and prejudice; and have sung for those unknown and unseen, awakening to who they are, in closets of oppression, or in search of community, that they may see our faces and hear our joy and know that the night is not forever, and that there are friends and brothers to light their way and to welcome them home; and

WHEREAS, The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus upcoming Pride Concert in July will celebrate their legacy and future in the LGBTQ community, the City of Rochester, State of New York, Nation, and World; and

WHEREAS, The arts, in whatever form depicted, are central to human expression; they are truly a universal language and their contribution to the development of friendship and understanding among all peoples cannot be overestimated; and

WHEREAS, The history, the heritage, and the lives of the people of all countries and all cultures are portrayed in their music; the art and act of sharing them enriches us altogether; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body that when musical societies of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be 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 40th Anniversary of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.