

Assembly Resolution No. 1053

BY: M. of A. Gibbs

COMMENDING DJ Kay Slay, successful New York disc jockey, record executive, and hip-hop pioneer, posthumously for his exemplary service to his community and State

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge and celebrate those who significantly add inspiration and encouragement to the people of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend DJ Kay Slay, successful New York disc jockey and record executive, and hip-hop pioneer, posthumously for his exemplary service to both his community and State; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay was born on August 14, 1966, in New York City, and was raised in East Harlem; as a child, he was drawn to disco and dancing the hustle, and when early hip-hop DJs began turning breakbeats from those songs into proto-rap music, he traveled to the Bronx to observe and participate in the rising culture; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay took up the affiliated art forms of break dancing and graffiti, even casually rapping with friends, and mastered every element of hip-hop culture; street art became his chief passion, first under the tag Spade 429, and later Dez TFA, which he shortened to Dez; and

WHEREAS, Amid the City's crackdown on graffiti, DJ Kay Slay developed a fascination with turntables; in 1989, after a difficult time in his life, he found solace in the Nation of Gods & Earths, and fully immersed himself into performing as a DJ and releasing exclusive mixtapes; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay secured his first multi-million dollar record contract with Columbia Records and released his debut album, "The Streetsweeper, Vol. 1," on May 20, 2003; that summer, he released a single and accompanying music video, "Too Much For Me," which featured a chorus sung by a then up-and-coming singer, Amerie, and verses from American rappers Birdman, Nas, and Foxy Brown; and

WHEREAS, His hit song "Too Much For Me" peaked at number 53 on the U.S. Billboard Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart; DJ Kay Slay would later go on to release dozens of albums, music projects, and videos and made many guest appearances, culminating in his magnum opus, Rolling 110 Deep; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay was also featured as an on-air radio personality at the world-famous Hot 97; he held the number-one-rated show, called the "Drama Hour," for over 20 years, helping shape Hot 97 into what it is today; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay also founded the longest-running urban print, **Straight Stuntin' Magazine**, and was a consummate business owner, hustler, and entrepreneur; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay served as a crucial bridge between hip-hop generations, developing from a teenage graffiti artist into an innovative radio personality; he was known for his exclusive mixtapes that stoked rap battles and helped change the music business forever; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay was as worthy of praise in his personal life as he was as an artist; he was a man of strong character and is cherished and deeply missed by those he leaves behind; and

WHEREAS, DJ Kay Slay is survived by his dear mother, the Honorable Sheila Grayson; brothers, Kwame and Michael Grayson; half-brother, Reggie Jones (aka Smoke 106); his partner, Shea Robinson; his business manager and brother-in-kind, Jarrod Whitaker; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, and close friends, a legion of fans and supporters, and hip-hop culture itself; and

WHEREAS, The industry giant, DJ Kay Slay, was a compassionate, dedicated man who inspired others with his passion and musical gifts; his dedication to his music leaves an indelible legacy of inspiration which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to his family, friends and countless fans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor DJ Kay Slay, successful New York disc jockey, record executive and hip-hop pioneer, posthumously for his exemplary service to his community and State; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of DJ Kay Slay.