

BY: Senator GRIFFO

HONORING Heather O'Connell upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Manilow Music Project Teacher Award by music icon Barry Manilow

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and recognize those dedicated professionals, who strive to enhance the quality of education for our students, and whose character, accomplishments and community contributions inspire all citizens of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Heather O'Connell upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Manilow Music Project Teacher Award by music icon Barry Manilow to be presented on Saturday, August 19, at a special backstage ceremony on the night of his concert at Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona, New York; and

WHEREAS, This year's esteemed Manilow Music Project Teacher Award recognizes an outstanding music teacher who helps bring music to life for their students; and

WHEREAS, A 2002 Songwriters Hall of Fame Inductee, Barry Manilow's incredible career featuring Grammy, Emmy, and TONY Award wins has given him the opportunity to give back to the community; the Manilow Music Project has given away over ten million dollars' worth of funds and music instrument donations to deserving music programs; and

WHEREAS, With many school music programs becoming severely depleted and even terminated, the Manilow Music Project aims to keep music in schools; and

WHEREAS, An Oneida High School music teacher, Heather O'Connell surpassed nine other finalists to win the \$10,000 award from the singer; the prize comes with a \$5,000 cash award and another \$5,000 in "Manilow bucks" to allow her to buy musical instruments for her school's music program; and

WHEREAS, Located in the city of Oneida in Madison County, Oneida High School has about 600 students; undoubtedly a caring individual, Heather O'Connell plans to purchase instruments for the students and support the community outreach program in the school with the prize money; and

WHEREAS, The Oneida City School District is indeed fortunate and blessed to have such a dedicated and respected educator; her wisdom and contributions reach into every classroom, truly making a difference in the lives of those lucky enough to work with her; and

WHEREAS, A significant contributor to education in New York State, Heather O'Connell has continually demonstrated an impressive dedication,

an unparalleled devotion, and an unrelenting enthusiasm for the quality of the educational programs and opportunities offered at Oneida High School for the benefit of its faculty and students, as well as for the entire community; 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 underestimated; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Heather O'Connell upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Manilow Music Project Teacher Award by music icon Barry Manilow; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Heather O'Connell.