

Senate Resolution No. 2024

BY: Senator BAILEY

COMMEMORATING the 30th Anniversary of Nas'
"Illmatic" album

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay just tribute to those musical geniuses whose commitment and creative talents contribute to the entertainment and cultural enrichment of their community, the State of New York, and the entire Nation; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Nas' "Illmatic" album; and

WHEREAS, Nas' debut album "Illmatic" is the crown jewel of the mid-90s classics that still define the genre; unlike other albums released in its wake, "Illmatic" was the game-changer that forever transformed the landscape of East Coast hip-hop; and

WHEREAS, Released on April 19, 1994, by Columbia Records, "Illmatic" raised the stakes for hip-hop production, lyrical technique, content, and overall artistic ambition; and

WHEREAS, Styled as a hardcore hip-hop album, "Illmatic" features multi-syllabic internal rhymes and inner-city narratives based on Nas' experiences growing up in Queens, New York; and

WHEREAS, The album debuted at number 12 on the US Billboard 200 chart, selling 63,000 copies in its first week; and

WHEREAS, Since its initial reception, "Illmatic" has been recognized by writers and music critics as a landmark album in East Coast hip hop; its influence on subsequent hip hop artists has been attributed to the album's production and Nas' lyricism, and contributed to the revival of the New York City rap scene, introducing a number of stylistic trends to the region; and

WHEREAS, The album is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential hip hop albums of all time, appearing on numerous best album lists by critics and publications; Billboard wrote in 2015 that "Illmatic" is widely seen as the best hip-hop album ever; in 2020, the album was ranked by Rolling Stone at number 44 on its list of The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time, and in the same year, it was selected by the Library of Congress for preservation in the National Recording Registry for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant"; and

WHEREAS, Over the last 30 years, the taut ten-track meditation on the universal struggle of a young man growing up in the Queensbridge Houses has remained resonant and relevant, truly revolutionizing hip-hop; its precise poetry introduced new terms and phrases that infiltrated hip-hop's lexicon, making Nas' debut album one of the most

technically masterful rap albums of the half-century; and

WHEREAS, A man of colossal talent, Nas is a brilliant artist and an inspiration to millions around the world; and

WHEREAS, The arts are the building blocks of civilization, and are central to human expression; they enlighten us and inspire the imagination; individuals which further such worthy purposes richly merit the recognition and appreciation of this Legislative Body and the people of the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Nas' "Illmatic" album; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Nas.