

BY: Senator WEBB

COMMEMORATING the 40th Anniversary of Southern Tier AIDS Program

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals that are devoted to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; 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 Southern Tier AIDS Program (STAP); and

WHEREAS, In 1984, amid the emergence of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a dedicated group of Broome County citizens comprised of healthcare professionals, educators, clergy, and community activists came together with a common purpose - to address the devastating impact of the disease on their community; this passionate coalition successfully secured funding from the New York State Department of Health's AIDS Institute to establish the Broome County AIDS Task Force; and

WHEREAS, STAP began its journey by establishing essential services, including a hotline, resource directory, and educational campaigns; the organization quickly expanded its reach to meet the needs of the growing severity of this disease, providing support programs for individuals living with HIV/AIDS and advocating for access, equity, and justice for affected communities; as the epidemic intensified, STAP emerged as a beacon of hope, offering much-needed services to those grappling with the physical, emotional, and social complexities of HIV/AIDS; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, STAP transitioned into a separately incorporated nonprofit entity, and evolved from its grassroots origins to become a leading provider of HIV/AIDS services, with offices spanning eight locations across the region; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Executive Director John Barry, STAP embraced a comprehensive approach to healthcare, encompassing prevention, treatment, and support services, while recognizing the importance of holistic care; as a result, the ever-impactful organization expanded its services beyond traditional HIV/AIDS support to address broader health and social needs within the community; and

WHEREAS, As the Southern Tier AIDS Program celebrates its 40th anniversary, the organization reflects on its remarkable journey and enduring legacy; over the years, STAP has touched the lives of countless individuals and families, providing essential support, resources, and hope in the face of adversity; and

WHEREAS, Over its 40-year history, Southern Tier AIDS Program has

been instrumental in providing support and care to 2,735 individuals living with HIV/AIDS; through its dedicated services and advocacy efforts, STAP has made a profound impact in enhancing the lives and well-being of those affected by HIV, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to improving health outcomes and fostering community resilience in the face of this disease; and

WHEREAS, From lifesaving Narcan kits to housing assistance and healthcare navigation, STAP's impact is felt across the Southern Tier region and beyond; and

WHEREAS, In 2023 alone, STAP's Narcan services saved the lives of 305 individuals, underscoring the organization's vital role in addressing the opioid epidemic; additionally, nearly 100 individuals and families received monthly housing stipends, totaling over \$510,000 in assistance; STAP's commitment to holistic care is evident in its provision of food aid to over 5,400 individuals and families, representing an 111% increase over the past two years; and

WHEREAS, Looking ahead, Southern Tier AIDS Program remains dedicated to its mission of promoting health, dignity, and social justice for all; as the world continues to grapple with new challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, STAP stands as a beacon of resilience, compassion, and community support; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to acknowledge this exceptional organization and its contributions to its community, and as a result, the State and Nation as a whole, fully confident that it will continue to enjoy the sparkling successes it has experienced thus far; and

WHEREAS, Organizations which give of their time and energies and serve the best interests of their communities are an asset beyond remuneration and cannot be sufficiently extolled; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of Southern Tier AIDS Program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Southern Tier AIDS Program.