

BY: Senator GRIFFO

CONGRATULATING Herbert C. Thorpe upon the occasion
of celebrating his 100th Birthday

WHEREAS, Senior citizens bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the increasingly active roles they play in today's society; their past contributions and future participation are a vital part of, and valuable asset to, the fabric of community life and activity; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to commemorate and recognize certain milestones celebrated by citizens 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 congratulate Herbert C. Thorpe upon the occasion of his 100th Birthday to be celebrated Saturday, January 14, 2023, at the First Presbyterian Church in Rome, New York; and

WHEREAS, Herbert C. Thorpe was born on January 9, 1923, in Manhattan, New York; raised in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, New York, he is the second oldest of six children born to Barbadian immigrants; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Alexander Hamilton High School, Herbert C. Thorpe enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps, working as a typist and automotive mechanic, before enlisting in the United States Army Reserves in 1942; and

WHEREAS, Upon completion of his basic training, Herbert C. Thorpe applied, and was accepted, to cadet school; in 1944, he arrived at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama to begin the rigorous journey to become one of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen; and

WHEREAS, Herbert C. Thorpe was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant Navigator Bombardier on December 30, 1944; because the Armed Air Forces were not integrating multi-engine air crews then, he was sent back to the Tuskegee Army Airfield where he went into advanced flying training to operate multi-engine aircraft; Herbert C. Thorpe was then qualified as a B-25 pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen; and

WHEREAS, After an honorable discharge in 1946, Herbert C. Thorpe returned to Brooklyn, New York where he worked for the Veterans Administration and the United States Postal Service before enrolling in New York University under the G.I. Bill; upon receiving his Bachelor of Electronic Engineering degree in 1953, Herbert C. Thorpe was employed in the Brooklyn Naval Yard as a radar engineer; it was then in 1959 that Herbert C. Thorpe moved with his wife, Jessie Thorpe, and their two children, to Rome, New York to work at the Griffiss Air Force Base until his retirement in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Imbued with the duty of serving his country as a proud Tuskegee Airman, Herbert C. Thorpe, along with his wife Jessie Thorpe, was instrumental in the founding of the Rome, New York Branch NAACP and its Afro-American Heritage Association; both Herbert C. Thorpe and Jessie Thorpe were well-known regional, cultural, civil and human rights advocates for more than 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Herbert C. Thorpe is the recipient of numerous honors, awards and recognitions for service to his country and community, including the New York State Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award in 2012 and a Rome Historical Society 1777 Medal of Honor Award in 2013; a lifelong patriot and never one to forget those who were integral to him becoming the great man he is today, Herbert C. Thorpe continues to be an active member of Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated, Claude D. Govan, Tri-State Chapter, New York; and

WHEREAS, Herbert C. Thorpe's indomitable wife, Jessie Thorpe, passed away on May 25, 2020, after 69 years of marriage; however, he continues to live on for both of them through the rejuvenating spirit of his two children, five grandchildren, one great grandson and two great granddaughters; and

WHEREAS, With his zest for life and infallible will, Herbert C. Thorpe has inspired and enhanced the lives of his family and friends; and

WHEREAS, This distinguished man has experienced the incredible joys and sorrows characteristic of and reserved for those with the stamina and courage to savor a full life; and

WHEREAS, Herbert C. Thorpe has enriched the lives of those around him through his joyous and sincere love for others and through the vibrant charm and infinite wisdom which comes only from a fullness of years; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize those who have reached such a remarkable age and who have witnessed and celebrated the innovations, cultural developments and incredible achievements of this country during the last century, while themselves contributing to the growth and excellence of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Herbert C. Thorpe upon the occasion of celebrating his 100th Birthday; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Herbert C. Thorpe.