

Assembly Resolution No. 2311

BY: M. of A. Gunther

HONORING Rose Isabel Baral Brown posthumously for a lifetime of dedicated service to the field of reproductive healthcare and rights

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Rose Isabel Baral Brown posthumously for a lifetime of dedicated service to the field of reproductive healthcare and rights; and

WHEREAS, Rose Isabel Baral Brown grew up in the Bronx, New York, and attended The High School of Music and Art in New York City before attending Harpur College, now known as SUNY Binghamton, where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1963; she later enrolled in the Master of Social Work program at Adelphi University in the early 1970s; and

WHEREAS, After earning her Master of Social Work degree, Rose Isabel Baral Brown began her lifework in safeguarding women's rights, particularly women's reproductive rights; she began this lifelong journey with her serving as Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Nassau County where she hired the affiliate's first director of development, thereby greatly expanding the affiliate's financial resources and its services while also creating a highly successful Teen Education Program, the sponsor of an annual Teen Health Conference attended by scores of young people, including pregnant teens, who received the kind of education and support many could not get at home or at school at a time when teen pregnancy rates in the area were escalating; and

WHEREAS, Rose Isabel Baral Brown later became the Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Suffolk County, a larger affiliate with a wider reach, where she established the County's only outpatient, Comprehensive Reproductive Health Care Center that included surgical abortions, and which, for the first time in the county, provided abortions to women on Medicaid who were living at or near the poverty level whose need for abortion services had long been completely ignored; and

WHEREAS, Rose Isabel Baral Brown provided a regional and national model for other Planned Parenthood affiliates by establishing exemplary advocacy and education programs for young people, including garnering national recognition for the creation of a Teen Theater; pioneering an annual fundraising event on the East End of Suffolk County; and working to address the emerging AIDS crisis, especially the special needs of women and children; and

WHEREAS, In the mid-1990s, Rose became instrumental in the years-long process of creating a strong new Planned Parenthood affiliate in New York State--Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic, the result of the merger between Planned Parenthood of Suffolk County and Planned Parenthood of Westchester and Rockland, which was certified by New York State in 1997; and

WHEREAS, As Executive Vice President of the newly developed Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic from 1997-2001, Rose Isabel Baral Brown helped steer this second-largest Planned Parenthood to success; her leadership helped in providing a host of reproductive health services through a network of 16 medical centers, creating a newly formed Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic Action Fund for statewide social welfare and legislative issues that impact Planned Parenthood's patients as well as Planned Parenthood's ability to provide care, as well as participation in the initial university-led medical trial of medication abortion; and

WHEREAS, Rose Isabel Baral Brown helped to define, strengthen, defend, and extend the reach of reproductive health services in New York State and the nation; she has stood up countless time, in numerous venues, many hostile, to advocate for women's reproductive rights and for the support of Planned Parenthood in New York State and throughout the country, and assumed leadership of critical bodies, such as the Planned Parenthood National Executive Directors Council; and

WHEREAS, After retirement, Rose Isabel Baral Brown devoted herself to helping guide Catskill area organizations, serving on the boards of the local NPR affiliate and the local library, as well as spending time with her beloved family and friends; and

WHEREAS, Rose Isabel Baral Brown died at the age of 80 on Wednesday, June 7, 2023; infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through her family's vivid and happy memories; her insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light, and hope to the countless lives she touched; and

WHEREAS, Her valued support system throughout her life had been her husband, Lester Mattis; cherished daughter, Chloe; son-in-law, Hal Friedlander; adored grandson, August; and the many friends, colleagues, and associates who cherished Rose Isabel Baral Brown's wise counsel, support, and love through the years, and rejoice in her many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Her passion, courage, and unwavering commitment to justice will continue to inspire the individuals with whom she worked for many years to come; her legacy of boundless compassion and her inspirational spirit are worthy of the highest praise from the citizens of this State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Rose Isabel Baral Brown leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all she served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Rose Isabel Baral Brown posthumously for a lifetime of dedicated service to the field of reproductive healthcare and rights; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Rose Isabel Baral Brown.