

BY: M. of A. Cruz

COMMEMORATING the 15th anniversary of Comunilife's
Life is Precious program

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that the quality and character of life in this great Empire State is greatly enriched by the faithful and diligent work of those organizations which serve to meet the needs 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 15th anniversary of Comunilife's Life is Precious program; and

WHEREAS, Since 2008, Comunilife's Life is Precious (LIP) program has provided suicide prevention activities to New York City Latina teens who have seriously considered or attempted suicide; the teens ranging from ages 12 to 18 are immigrants or first generation Americans and mostly live in some of New York City's lowest income neighborhoods in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Washington Heights; as well as Poughkeepsie and Yonkers; and

WHEREAS, LIP's program philosophy of "Survive, Strive and Thrive" means that the program serves as a safe place in which individuals living with depression, suicide ideation, or other mental illnesses can receive support, engage in activities that allow teens to develop their unique voice, and access tools that help the teens envision and achieve their goals; and

WHEREAS, Latina adolescent suicide has reached epidemic proportions in New York State, having become the leading cause of death for Latina teens; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic teens face a unique set of challenges with regard to mental health; Hispanic culture can sometimes stigmatize talking about mental health and issues outside the family, limiting access to mental health providers; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 exacerbated these issues, adding an extra level of stress due to social isolation, overcrowding, unemployment, housing and food insecurity, inadequate remote learning opportunities, inability to access financial relief due to immigration status, COVID related illness and fatalities, and increased lack of outpatient mental health capacity; and

WHEREAS, LIP offers program activities that include academic support, wellness activities, expressive arts therapy and family services; and

WHEREAS, To date, more than 600 Latina teens have participated in LIP and their mental health has improved; research studying girls and

their success with the program discovered that for every month a Latina teen participates in the LIP program her level of suicide ideation and depression decreases; and

WHEREAS, Comunilife's goal is to show that LIP is a community informed, evidence based model of care; the program directly addresses the risk factors associated with Latina adolescent suicide, provides culturally competent services that integrate cultural norms into all program development, and incorporates the entire family; and

WHEREAS, Today, under the luminous leadership of Dr. Rosa M. Gil, President and CEO of Comunilife, the Life is Precious program continues to evolve and successfully address the needs of the Latina community that struggle with mental health; and

WHEREAS, The success of Comunilife's Life is Precious program is in direct correlation to the efforts of its Board of Directors and staff, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors on behalf of the institution and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those organizations which unselfishly devote their energy, talent and thoughtful care on behalf of improving the quality and dignity of life in the community, are worthy and due full praise and recognition for their noble and dedicated efforts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 15th anniversary of Comunilife's Life is Precious program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Comunilife and Dr. Rosa M. Gil.