

BY: M. of A. Cook

HONORING Shaykh Safraz Bacchus upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Lincoln-King Visionary Award for his commitment and service to his community

WHEREAS, Individuals who give of their time and energies and serve the best interests of their communities are an asset beyond remuneration and cannot be sufficiently extolled; and

WHEREAS, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has given not only of his time and energies but also of his competence, intelligence, and leadership, and consequently has been designated for special honor; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Shaykh Safraz Bacchus upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Lincoln-King Visionary Award for his commitment and service to his community, to be celebrated at the Lincoln-King Visionary Awards Gala, "From Dream to Greatness," on Saturday, February 10, 2024, at the Sand Castle in Franklin Square, New York; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious community gala is held annually to unite the international community and to celebrate unity in diversity while recognizing community leaders for their services; and

WHEREAS, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has been called upon to contribute his time and talents to countless civic and charitable endeavors and has always given of himself unstintingly; and

WHEREAS, In 1993, because of his outstanding performance in several Imams Training Programs, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus was awarded a full scholarship sponsored by the Government of Egypt in collaboration with the Government of Guyana to pursue studies in Islamic Jurisprudence at the famous Al Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt; and

WHEREAS, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus completed his studies in Islamic Jurisprudence & Arabic Language with training also on Islamic Dawah Methodology and Islamic Economics from Al Azhar University in 2004; he completed his master's degree in Islamic Theology in 2015; he had the esteemed privilege of sitting and studying with famed scholars such as the Grand Mufti of Egypt Dr. Ali Gomah, Shaykh Habeeb Ali Jiffri, and Dr. Omar Hashim, former Chancellor of Al Azhar; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return to Guyana, Shaykh Safraz spearheaded a surge in Islamic knowledge sharing, training and Dawah and held many roles within the Central Islamic Organization of Guyana (CIOG) including Orphan, Zakaah and Halaal Committees and Director of Education and Dawah; and

WHEREAS, Shaykh Safraz also hosted several TV Programs for Islamic Dawah, and his work allowed him to travel extensively internationally to

Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bosnia, United States, Jamaica, Chile, Trinidad, and Suriname, adding to the depth of cultural experience and knowledge he retains and demonstrates for the benefit of others today; and

WHEREAS, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus migrated to New York in February of 2013 with his wife to take on the role of Lead Imam of the Central Mosque of New York (Masjid Al Abidin), and has been serving as the leading Imam of Masjid- AL Abidin for the past five years; and

WHEREAS, In true care for his community, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has developed a passion for Chaplaincy in the health care system and has completed four units of clinical pastoral education at the Northwell Health University Hospital; and

WHEREAS, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has acquired the unique and important skills to deliver counseling to individuals and to groups through acts of worship and rituals; he grew up in Guyana, a multi-ethnic, multi-faith, and multicultural society; his upbringing in a diverse social and cultural space makes him committed to a spiritual ethos that is inclusive and plural; and

WHEREAS, For the past five years Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has been serving a dynamic and diverse community of Muslims in the position of Imam at Masjid Al Abidin in Queens, New York; as an Imam, he has had the wonderful opportunity of collaborating with faith leaders and law enforcement officials to help realize a lived environment that is based on goodness for all citizens of his remarkable city; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the entire period of his community service, a period of constructive involvement, Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has stood constant in dignity, good grace, and humor; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by an individual for the benefit of others which Shaykh Safraz Bacchus has displayed throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, It has always been the objective of this Legislative Body to honor and support those individuals who have displayed their commitment to the betterment of their communities, and it is the intent of this Legislative Body to inscribe upon its records, this tribute to Shaykh Safraz Bacchus, that future generations may know and appreciate his admirable character, his many benevolent deeds, and the respect and esteem in which he is held by his peers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Shaykh Safraz Bacchus upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Lincoln-King Visionary Award for his commitment and service to his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Shaykh Safraz Bacchus.