

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern and Rebittzen Sheila Halpern after 60 years of dedicated leadership to the Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated on May 20, 2012

WHEREAS, The character and richness of religious and community life in this noble Empire State is nourished and fulfilled through the faithful concern and selfless devotion of those who would commit their energies and purpose to the ministry of others; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to bring full recognition and just tribute to those individuals who distinguish themselves and the ministry through their unremitting commitment and preeminence of service; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern and Rebittzen Sheila Halpern after 60 years of dedicated leadership to the Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Brooklyn, New York, to be recognized at its 60th Anniversary celebration on Sunday, May 20, 2012; and

WHEREAS, The Flatbush Park Jewish Center was founded in 1952, by Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern; and

WHEREAS, During his tenure, he has guided and overseen the development from humble beginnings in storefronts on Mill Avenue and later on Avenue N, to its present prominence as one of the leading Orthodox Synagogues in New York in the permanent Synagogue/Jewish Center complex on Avenue U; and

WHEREAS, With approximately 400 family members, the congregation actively supports Torah, religious and social programs in Mill Basin as well as New York City and Israel; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern graduated from Yeshiva College in 1949, and was ordained by Rabbi Samuel Belkin, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik and Rabbi Moshe Shatzkes, of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Rabbinical Seminary of Yeshiva University in 1952; and

WHEREAS, Later that year, he was called to the pulpit which he still occupies in the Flatbush Park Jewish Center; in 1982, he was awarded the Doctor of Divinity Degree, Honoris Causa, recognizing his successful building, spiritually and physically, of both the Center and the community; and

WHEREAS, In 1952, Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern, single and newly ordained by the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva University, took what he thought was a temporary pulpit in a pioneer Brooklyn Jewish community later to be named Mill Basin; and

WHEREAS, Congregants met in a store on Avenue N; a daily minyan was hard to come by, but families were steadily trickling into the area from such fading Jewish areas as Brownsville and East New York; and

WHEREAS, The congregants, many of them World War II veterans from Orthodox backgrounds, were drawn to the neighborhood by affordable homes; 50 years later, the congregation has grown into the 600-member Flatbush Park Jewish Center, with a sprawling, four-building complex on Avenue U, numerous youth programs, an affiliated yeshiva and several separate daily and Shabbat minyans; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern married the former Sheila Lifshutz, and together they raised three wonderful children, Neil, Risa and Beth; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his service to the Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern served as a Chaplain in the 71st Infantry of the 42nd Division of the National Guard for 10 years, and sits on the New York Board of Rabbis; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, the Flatbush Park Jewish Center has been a symbol of hope and prosperity in the Mill Basin Jewish community,

serving a diverse group of worshipers including seniors, professionals, and the recently organized young families division; and

WHEREAS, Together, Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern and his loving wife, Sheila Halpern have faithfully served as spiritual leaders for the past six decades, making their tenure both extraordinary and historic accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Under his spiritual guidance, the Flatbush Park Jewish Center has grown to approximately 1,000 Jewish families, and serves not only as a place of worship but also for religious study, social gathering and community service; and

WHEREAS, This distinguished man of God has always given enlightenment, guidance and wisdom to the many entrusted to his care and has administered abundantly and unstintingly to the spiritual and corporal needs of all; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that when a person of such noble aims and accomplishments is brought to our attention it is appropriate to publicly and jubilantly proclaim and commend that individual for the edification of others; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern and Rebittzen Sheila Halpern after 60 years of dedicated leadership to the Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Brooklyn, New York, noting their unremitting and compassionate faith and their exemplary service to God, man, and their community, and extending to them the heartfelt best wishes of this Legislative Body for a future of purposeful success and well-being; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Rabbi Dr. David S. Halpern and Rebittzen Sheila Halpern.