

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending Imam Shamsi Ali upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2014 Friendship Award by the Turkish Cultural Center Queens

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the causes of peace and understanding, building bridges between cultures for the benefit of us all; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Imam Shamsi Ali upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2014 Friendship Award by the Turkish Cultural Center Queens, which was celebrated at its 11th Annual Friendship Dinner and Awards Ceremony held on Thursday, April 10, 2014, in Flushing Town Hall, Queens, New York; and

WHEREAS, Turkish Cultural Center Queens (TCCQ) is the premier source of information for the people of Queens County about the rich history, culture and heritage of Turkey; committed to community involvement, the organization actively encourages international cultural exchanges via special events and projects such as business meetings, multicultural discussion forums and international trips to Turkey; and

WHEREAS, The TCCQ's 11th Annual Friendship Dinner and Awards Ceremony celebrates diversity, peace and harmony among cultures, promoting the appreciation and enjoyment of the entire colorful spectrum of its community; the theme for this year's event is "Freedom of Speech and Respect for the Sacred"; and

WHEREAS, Imam Shamsi Ali is a renowned Islamic Scholar and well-known leader in the New York City Muslim community; he is the director and spiritual leader of the Jamaica Muslim Center and an advisory board member to numerous interfaith organizations including the Tanenbaum Center and Federation for Middle East Peace; he is also Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Asean Muslim Federation of North America; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed man was appointed Ambassador for Peace by the International Religious Federation and has been invited to the White House multiple times to discuss religious matters; he was among the religious leaders selected to accompany President George W. Bush on his visit to Ground Zero after the September 11th attacks; and

WHEREAS, Imam Ali has been the recipient of many accolades and awards for his tireless work in forging cross-cultural dialogue including the ICU Interfaith Award and the Ellis Island Medal of Honor Award; furthermore, he was named one of seven most influential religious leaders in New York City by NEW YORK MAGAZINE; and

WHEREAS, Imam Shamsi Ali is the co-author of SONS OF ABRAHAM: A CANDID CONVERSATION ABOUT THE ISSUES THAT DIVIDE AND UNITE JEWS AND MUSLIMS, which he wrote with Rabbi Marc Schneier; this inspirational work features a foreword by former President Bill Clinton; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Imam Shamsi Ali upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2014 Friendship Award by the Turkish Cultural Center Queens; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Imam Shamsi Ali.