

BY: Senator MONTGOMERY

COMMEMORATING the 40th Anniversary of the
Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare 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 40th Anniversary of the Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.; this momentous occasion will be celebrated with a year-long series, "Preserving Our Legacy: The Drum A Listen-Learn-Action Institute," focusing on issues impacting the local community; and

WHEREAS, The Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc. is a not-for-profit, volunteer service organization which is dedicated to the continued preservation, revitalization and enhancement of its community; and

WHEREAS, The Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc. was organized in 1978 by a small group of friends and neighbors who wanted to make a lasting contribution to their great community; the founding members included George Glee, Jr., Bernard McDonald, Reginald Shell, Brenda Fryson, Gloria Green and Clarence Jones; and

WHEREAS, In those days, urban renewal meant urban destruction and displacement, and people all over the neighborhood were determined to hold onto Bedford-Stuyvesant's magnificent housing stock; yet young people and families were leaving in alarming numbers; they were leaving the homes, apartment buildings and commercial properties that their parents and grandparents, those first generations of African Americans from the South and the Caribbean, had labored to acquire; and

WHEREAS, This became the basis for the Brownstoners first major initiative which was designed to actively encourage disillusioned residents and those who had already left to "Come on Home to Bed-Stuy"; the annual house tour was developed to reshape the media's concept of the community; and

WHEREAS, The successful campaign sparked renewed pride in people who still lived here and encouraged thousands of African Americans, young and not so young, to become part of a thriving and welcoming community; and

WHEREAS, The Brownstoners major service projects have consistently focused on education, economic development, housing and community involvement; the hands-on organization maximizes its resources through

the wealth of skills its members freely share; its tradition of taking it to the streets is a strategy which has reached every corner of this community through initiatives such as the tax lien outreach project and voter registration drives; and

WHEREAS, Four decades later, its motto, "Come on Home to Bed-Stuy," is even more relevant; for the Brownstoners, "Home" is a spiritual place for the next generation of children of the African Diaspora, as well as for those families which make Bedford-Stuyvesant a jewel of diversity among New York's sparkling mosaic of neighborhoods, each with its own rich culture; and

WHEREAS, The success of Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc. is in direct correlation to the efforts of its members, 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 when organizations 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 commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.