

BY: Senator PARKER

MOURNING the death of Ora Abdur-Razzaq, prominent educator, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who, through their selfless commitment and dedication, have served to better the quality of life in our community and have had a measurable positive impact on the lives of its residents; Ora Abdur-Razzaq was one such individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Ora Abdur-Razzaq, noting the significance of her purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Ora Abdur-Razzaq of Brooklyn, New York, died on Friday, May 8, 2020, at the age of 82; and

WHEREAS, Ora Mae Clark was born the oldest of four children to Annie Mae and Theodore Clark on February 28, 1938, in Miami, Florida; and

WHEREAS, A truly gifted student who relentlessly pursued knowledge, Ora Mae Clark loved reading, writing and all school subjects; she once wrote a letter to the President of the United States about the injustices perpetrated against Black people in the South and was visited by the secret service, who were shocked to find out she was only 12 years old; and

WHEREAS, Like many children of the South, Ora Mae Clark learned to cook and sew from her mother; she was well-known for her Singer sewing machine and her cooking, especially pound cakes and cheesecakes; and

WHEREAS, After attending Nyack College, Ora Mae Clark worked as a secretary, typing over 100 words per minute and writing shorthand; and

WHEREAS, In October of 1965, Abdullah Abdur-Razzaq and Ora Mae Clark were united in marriage and together they raised five children, Malik, Alia, Samad, Karim and Baria; and

WHEREAS, Unimpressed with New York City's Public School system, Ora Abdur-Razzaq taught her children reading, writing, arithmetic, science and Black History from home; friends and family, impressed with the intellect of her children, asked if she could teach their children too; and

WHEREAS, During this time, Ora Abdur-Razzaq turned her living room into a classroom and, much to the dismay of the New York City Board of Education, the classroom flourished and grew; that was the birth of the Al-Karim School, later known as Cush Campus Schools; and

WHEREAS, Under the able leadership of this extraordinary woman,

Al-Karim/Cush Campus Schools became famous for nurturing exceptional scholars who performed several grade levels ahead of their peers across the country; and

WHEREAS, While running Al-Karim School, Ora Abdur-Razzaq took graduate level education classes at City College; she went on to earn a Master's degree in Education from St. John's University and a Master's in Divinity from New York Theological Seminary, which truly inspired her children, grandchildren and students to be life-long learners; and

WHEREAS, Raised in the Church of God in Christ, Ora Abdur-Razzaq was a long-time member of First Church of God in Christ in Brooklyn; her last home of worship was Kelly Temple Church of God in Christ in Harlem, where she was a renowned and an active member; and

WHEREAS, In addition to her five children, Ora Abdur-Razzaq is survived by her siblings, Juanita Evans, Charlie Byrd Jr., Ann Byrd-Jordan, Adrienne Brealand, Phyllis Byrd Ochilo and James Davis; 10 grandchildren, Tariqua, Tunisia, Khaair, Jahi, Noni, Kalila, Leilani, Mataya, Karim and Celia; one great-grandchild, Kai; and a plethora of cousins, nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Ora Abdur-Razzaq, who displayed many exceptional talents and unique qualities, lived an immensely beautiful life built on compassion, kindness, and respect for others; and

WHEREAS, Through her profound words of wisdom, Ora Abdur-Razzaq's legacy of infinite selflessness, brilliance and benevolence, will shine on through her family's vivid and happy memories; her insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love and hope for all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing person; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Ora Abdur-Razzaq, prominent educator, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Ora Abdur-Razzaq.