

BY: Senator PARKER

MOURNING the death of New York State Assemblyman David Gantt, transformative leader, civil rights pioneer and strong advocate for the people of this great Empire State

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow that this Legislative Body, representing the people of the State of New York, is moved this day to pay tribute to an eminent man of indomitable faith and dedication whose public service and countless accomplishments will forever stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, David Gantt of Rochester, New York, died on Wednesday, July 1, 2020, at the age of 78; and

WHEREAS, Born on September 12, 1941, David Gantt attended Franklin High School, Roberts Wesleyan College, and Rochester Institute of Technology; and

WHEREAS, A longtime resident of the City of Rochester, David Gantt carried on the legacy of his mother, Lena M. Gantt, in fighting unapologetically on behalf of poor people in the Greater Rochester Community for more than four decades; and

WHEREAS, David Gantt began his illustrious career as a youth counselor for the City of Rochester as well as an administrator for the Anthony L. Jordan Health Center before serving the 22nd Legislative District in the Monroe County Legislature for nine years; and

WHEREAS, With an unwavering love and commitment to his community, David Gantt joined the New York State Assembly in 1983, becoming the first African American from Monroe County elected to hold state office; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his decorated 37 year career representing the 137th Assembly District in the New York State Legislature, David Gantt changed the landscape of the Rochester community and gave a voice to the disenfranchised; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, as an elected official, Assemblyman David Gantt fought tirelessly for affordable housing, voting rights, access to healthcare, reliable infrastructure, and safe neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Assemblyman David Gantt was the author of numerous bills enacted into state law, including: a statewide law aimed at driving drug dealers out of residential neighborhoods; a law designed to help undercover law enforcement officials crack down on narcotics dealers; a law which enhances the economic development opportunities of municipalities throughout New York State; and numerous laws which ensure equal access to voters at their local polling places; and

WHEREAS, Chairman of the Assembly Standing Committee on Transportation, Assemblyman David Gantt also served as Co-Chair of the Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment, ushering the Assembly Majority through the 1990 Census and the subsequent reapportionment of legislative districts; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, he chaired both the Assembly Subcommittee on Affordable Housing and the Subcommittee on Voter Registration, and he was a member of the Assembly Standing Committees on: Economic Development, Corporations, Rules, Local Governments; and Ways and Means; and

WHEREAS, Assemblyman David Gantt has been the proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades from such organizations as the Upstairs Youth Agency, Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Baden Street Settlement, Webster Avenue Family Resource Center, Monroe County Public Defender's Office, Monroe County Board of Elections and the New York State Association of Counties; and

WHEREAS, Assemblyman David Gantt was truly a voice for the voiceless and a mentor to countless community leaders, elected officials and everyday citizens alike; his legacy will live on in the hearts, minds and actions of all those he helped, lifted up, and fought for over the past 45 years; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his parents, Lena Mae and David Gantt, Sr., David Gantt is survived by his three children, Kathleen Hope, Troy Hightower, Troy Sizer; and his two brothers, Freddie Gantt and Tyrone Gantt; as well as his grandchildren, other family members and many friends; and

WHEREAS, Every citizen in New York State has most certainly benefited, in one way or another, from the deep dedication, intelligence and commitment that David Gantt brought to his work as a mentor, legislator and public policy-maker; a loyal friend and trusted advisor, he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of New York State Assemblyman David Gantt, transformative leader, civil rights pioneer and strong advocate for the people of this great Empire State; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Assemblyman David Gantt.