Senate Resolution No. 1017

BY: Senator RAMOS

HONORING the Lexington School for the Deaf upon the occasion of hosting its 26th Annual Esther Lustig Memorial Basketball Classic vs. Assembly/Senate All-Stars on May 23, 2023

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those institutions of true purpose and high achievement whose exemplary programs and accomplishments clearly demonstrate an enduring pursuit of excellence in the education of deaf youth in the Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor the Lexington School for the Deaf upon the occasion of hosting its 26th Annual Esther Lustig Memorial Basketball Classic to be held at the Kipp Tech Valley Charter School Gymnasium on Tuesday, May 23, 2023; and

WHEREAS, This annual contest will feature the Lexington School for the Deaf versus the Assembly and Senate All-Stars; this special event is named in loving memory of dear friend and colleague Esther Lustig; and

WHEREAS, The Lexington School for the Deaf was founded in 1864 when the first class of six children and an instructor convened at the home of Isaac and Hannah Rosenfeld; and

WHEREAS, Due to constantly increasing enrollment, the school moved several times until it settled in 1882, at 904 Lexington Avenue with 161 students; in 1934, it officially became the Lexington School for the Deaf; and

WHEREAS, The Lexington School for the Deaf continued to grow and in 1968, its new home was inaugurated on a seven-acre site at 30th Avenue and 75th Street in Jackson Heights, Queens; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Lexington School for the Deaf, with a student body over 350, is the largest school for the deaf in New York State, and its student body resides throughout the five boroughs of New York City; and

WHEREAS, A charter member of the 4201 Association, New York State-supported private schools for disabled children, the Lexington School for the Deaf houses the only high school in New York City under the auspices of the 4201 charter; and

WHEREAS, The Lexington School for the Deaf has been recognized at the local, national and international levels for its pioneering programs, including the first nursery program for deaf children on the east coast in 1937, a Research Department to promote the investigation of educational, developmental and vocational issues affecting deaf children and adults in 1960, and a Special Education Unit for deaf

children of all ages with serious emotional problems in 1979; and

WHEREAS, In the 1980s, the Lexington School for the Deaf became known as the Lexington School for the Deaf/Center for the Deaf after establishing several affiliate agencies to support the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children and adults, including the Lexington Center for Mental Health Services, the Lexington Hearing and Speech Center and the Lexington Vocational Services, a New York State Education Department-Vocational Services for Individuals with Disabilities-funded program; and

WHEREAS, The Lexington School for the Deaf developed a new approach to teaching in the mid-1990s; it became the first Mediated Learning educational model in a school for the deaf, which earned it the federal designation of a Most Effective Practices school; and

WHEREAS, In addition to its strong academic program, the Lexington School for the Deaf offers a broad range of physical and cultural education programs, including a highly regarded basketball team; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, Joseph Crowley, a former member of the New York State Assembly representing the Lexington School for the Deaf, established the Lexington School versus the New York State Legislature Basketball Game; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to extend its highest commendation to all of the individuals who have been involved with the Lexington School for the Deaf, past and present, noting the importance of their work and their enduring commitment to deaf children; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the Lexington School for the Deaf upon the occasion of hosting its 26th Annual Esther Lustig Memorial Basketball Classic; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Russell O. West, CEO/Superintendent; Jane Moran, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Frank Dattolo, Upper School Principal; Carlos Aponte-Salcedo, Jr., Director of Student & Family Engagement; Cindy S. Casson, Director, Community Relations; Carl Sorrentino, Athletic Director; Gerald Sorrentino, Varsity Boys Basketball Coach; Samer Abualya, Varsity Boys Basketball Assistant Coach; Melissa Wells, Cheerleading Coach; and Sabrina Torres, Cheerleading Assistant Coach.