Senate Resolution No. 605

BY: Senator BAILEY

MOURNING the death of Bobby Caldwell, music industry icon, brilliant artist, and inspiration to millions around the world

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to those musical geniuses whose commitment and creative talents have contributed to the entertainment and cultural enrichment of their community and the entire State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Bobby Caldwell, a singer-songwriter whose sultry R&B hit "What You Won't Do for Love" propelled his debut album to double-platinum status in 1978 and was later covered by more than 100 artists including chart-toppers like Boyz II Men and Michael Bolton, died on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at the age of 71; and

WHEREAS, Over his four-decade career, Bobby Caldwell swerved freely among genres, exploring R&B, reggae, soft rock and smooth jazz, as well as standards from the Great American Songbook; he recorded more than a dozen albums under his own name; and

WHEREAS, While his skills as an old-school crooner, not to mention his trademark fedora, were convincing enough to land him a gig as Frank Sinatra in a Las Vegas revue called "The Rat Pack Is Back!" in the 1990s, he was best known as a silky-voiced master of blue-eyed soul; and

WHEREAS, A highly regarded songwriter, Bobby Caldwell's songs were recorded by Chicago, Boz Scaggs, Neil Diamond and Al Jarreau, among others; "The Next Time I Fall," which he wrote with Paul Gordon, became a hit for Peter Cetera and Amy Grant, reaching No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1986; in 2020, Billboard included the song on a list of the 25 greatest love songs; and

WHEREAS, Robert Hunter Caldwell was born on August 15, 1951 in Manhattan, New York, and spent much of his youth in Miami; his parents, Bob and Carolyn Caldwell, were entertainers who hosted two early television variety shows, "42nd Street Review" in New York and "Suppertime" in Pittsburgh, before moving the family to Miami; and

WHEREAS, By age 17, Bobby Caldwell was writing and performing his own material; he soon moved to Las Vegas, where he performed with a group called Katmandu and cut an album in 1971; in the early 1970s, he got a turn in the spotlight as a rhythm guitarist for Little Richard; and

WHEREAS, Bobby Caldwell spent the next several years trying to make a name for himself, playing in bars and recording demos; he finally found a taste of stardom in his own right with the success of "What You Won't Do for Love"; that success continued in the early 1980s with albums like "Cat in the Hat" (1980) and "Carry On" (1982); and

WHEREAS, Bobby Caldwell continued to record and perform for decades; in 2015, he notched a comeback with his album "Cool Uncle," which he made with the renowned R&B producer Jack Splash; the album crossed generational lines, featuring guest artists Deniece Williams, CeeLo Green and Jessie Ware, and climbed the Billboard contemporary jazz chart; **Rolling Stone** called the album "2015's smartest retro-soul revival"; and

WHEREAS, Bobby Caldwell's songs and samples have contributed to more than $40 million in sales, with artists as diverse as Tupac Shakur, Roberta Flack, Go West, Vanessa Williams and the Notorious B.I.G. sampling his music; most recently, his songs were also sampled by hip-hop artists Lil Nas X and Chance the Rapper; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, he was featured on "The CBS Second Cup Cafe," "The Tonight Show," "BET Jazz Central," and has made numerous national and local network appearances; and

WHEREAS, A man of colossal talent, this extraordinary man toured the United States and the globe for 40 years, truly devoting his entire life to song writing, recording, performing, and most of all making people happy; and

WHEREAS, Bobby Caldwell's dedication to his music leaves an indelible legacy of inspiration which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to his family, friends and countless fans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Bobby Caldwell, and to express its deepest sympathy to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Bobby Caldwell.