

BY: Senator PARKER

HONORING Akeem Rudder upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Strategic Vision Award in Sports, Health & Fitness by Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc.

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend individuals whose dedication to sport, community empowerment, and inclusive health and fitness initiatives has created opportunities, inspired others, and advanced equity for all participants in athletic life; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is proud to honor Akeem Rudder, senior national hockey player, inclusive sports pioneer, and founder of the IncludeU Sports Academy, upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Strategic Vision Award in Sports, Health & Fitness by Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc., on Wednesday, February 25, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 2006 by Carl Gray, the Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc., is a nonprofit organization dedicated to recognizing distinguished individuals of color across the Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa, celebrating "Unsung Heroes and Heroines" whose leadership, resilience, and service have made a lasting impact across business, sports, healthcare, culture, and community development; and

WHEREAS, Akeem Rudder is a distinguished senior national hockey team player for Barbados who has represented his country at all levels of competition, demonstrating athletic excellence, leadership, and competitive integrity on the international stage; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his athletic achievements, Akeem Rudder is a committed advocate for inclusive sport, founding the IncludeU Sports Academy to expand participation in physical activity and competitive sport for individuals with special needs and physical disabilities, using sport as a vehicle for holistic development, physical literacy, and community belonging; and

WHEREAS, Through IncludeU Sports Academy, Akeem Rudder has created programs that blend sport science, physical education, and individualized support, working with teachers, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists to design long-form, ability-based training that ensures all participants are supported and empowered; and

WHEREAS, Akeem Rudder's work in inclusive athletics extends through partnerships with organizations such as the Barbados Down Syndrome Association, and his contributions to adaptive sport has been recognized locally, including receipt of the Banyan Award for raising awareness of health, wellness, and inclusive sport participation; and

WHEREAS, Most recently, Akeem Rudder served as the director of IncludeU Sports Academy at a public legacy event that brought disability advocacy groups together to celebrate inclusion through sport, highlighting the Academy's role in preparing children and adults for pathways into Special Olympics and Paralympic competition; and

WHEREAS, Through his enduring commitment to equity in sport, his strategic vision for inclusive physical activity, and his demonstration of how athletic excellence can intersect with community service, Akeem Rudder continues to uplift individuals across Barbados and the Caribbean, expanding access to health, fitness, and sport for all; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Akeem Rudder upon his designation as recipient of the Strategic Vision Award in Sports, Health & Fitness by Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc., and to commend his exemplary contributions to inclusive sport, community empowerment, and athletic leadership; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Akeem Rudder as an expression of the highest respect and appreciation of this Legislative Body.