

Senate Resolution No. 216

**BY:** Senator PARKER

**MOURNING** the death of Reverend Doctor Jerry B. West Sr., distinguished citizen, man of faith, and devoted member of his community

**WHEREAS,** It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and this great Empire State; and

**WHEREAS,** Jerry B. West Sr., born in Queens New York, died on December 25, 2024, at the age of 77; and

**WHEREAS,** Jerry B. West Sr. attended P.S. 111 and Junior High School 204 in the Long Island City Area of Queens, New York, and distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

**WHEREAS,** Growing up attending Long Island City Gospel Tabernacle, this is where Jerry B. West Sr. received a solid religious foundation, learning both about prayer and the deeper understandings of scripture; and

**WHEREAS,** Jerry B. West Sr. began preaching at the young age of 14, conquering an intense stuttering problem through his faith, allowing him to blossom him into a captivating and strong preacher for the rest of his devout life; and

**WHEREAS,** At the age of 16, Jerry B. West Sr. became an ordained minister and enjoyed traveling around New York City meeting likeminded youth; and

**WHEREAS,** Quickly finding passion in the field of mathematics during his time at Central Commercial High School, Jerry B. West Sr. graduated with a specialization in accounting; following his graduation, he attended York College where he majored in Accounting, and was later conferred a Doctor of Religious Studies degree from Trinity Hall College; and

**WHEREAS,** One Sunday after church service, he attended a church musical where he met the woman who would soon become the love of his life and cherished wife, Betty Jean Coaxum; and

**WHEREAS,** The two married in November of 1968 and went on to have three beautiful children, Lelethia, Jerry Jr., and Samuel Bruce; and

**WHEREAS,** The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr. began attending the Holy Trinity Church of God in Christ with his family; his dedication to the church resulted in being named an Elder; in addition to being placed over the Council of Elders and Ministers in the church, he began to serve as the department head of the Eastern New York Jurisdiction's

newly created office of Civic and Urban Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, Committed to bettering his community, The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr. spearheaded the introduction of the jurisdiction to the "Summer Lunch Program" and convinced many local pastors and churches of varying denominations to receive food and serve it daily to local children throughout summers; and

**WHEREAS**, After serving diligently for 15 years at his local church, The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr. accepted the office of Pastor; he later purchased a building which was formerly owned by the late Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm; Pastor West and Lady Betty founded Mt. Moriah Church of God in Christ and the Mt. Moriah Christian Academy at this location; and

**WHEREAS**, The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr. also took up the task to transform the local park in the neighborhood, Lincoln Terrace Park, into a more safe, clean, and lively space for all of the local community; he began preaching there at night, delivering sermons and songs, referring to his efforts as "Urban Missionary Work"; he would engage with local people in need of help or guidance, offering prayer and conversation without discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, Now, 40 years later, Lincoln Terrace Park is a beautiful place with lush gardens, freshly painted ball courts, and more; this revitalization is credited to this devoted preacher who refused to sit idly by; and

**WHEREAS**, The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr.'s commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

**WHEREAS**, The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr. is survived by his daughter, Lelethia Colleen Wooten (Cedric); sons, Jerry West Jr. (Celeste), and Samuel Bruce West (Courtney); nine grandchildren, Gabriel, Kaitlyn, Michael, Sydney, Taylor, Aniyah, Samantha, Kendrick, and Miles; brothers, Altion (Elaine), Alphonso (Mattie), Donald (Rebecca), Larnel (Connie), Kenny Rae (Patricia), William (Princess), and David; sisters, Geraldine, Arlene (Dean), Irene, and Sitara (Ernie); and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends; and

**WHEREAS**, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr. leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Reverend Doctor Jerry B. West Sr., distinguished citizen, man of faith, and devoted member of his community; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of The Reverend Dr. Jerry B. West Sr.