

BY: Senator GRIFFO

CONGRATULATING Sofronio Vasquez upon the occasion of winning Season 26 of "The Voice"

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize the dedication and commitment of individuals who distinguish themselves through excellence in musical competition; and

WHEREAS, Musical competition provides an opportunity for individuals to exhibit their outstanding skills to an audience, thereby giving them a sense of pride in their hard work and efforts; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate Sofronio Vasquez upon the occasion of winning Season 26 of "The Voice" on Tuesday, December 10, 2024; and

WHEREAS, The hard-working 32-year-old, Sofronio Vasquez, has overcome many obstacles and challenges in his life; navigating his journey from a one-room house in the Philippines, he attended dental school, settled in Utica, New York, and achieved his greatest victory on the television show, "The Voice," to fulfill his dream of lifting his family out of poverty; and

WHEREAS, Sofronio Vasquez grew up on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines where he and his family lived in poverty although both of his parents held government jobs; music was ever-present in the Vasquez household and a source of hope and inspiration; and

WHEREAS, After finishing school, Sofronio Vasquez opted to attend dental school to provide for his family financially; additionally, he entered singing competitions to earn a little extra money; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 10 years ago, Sofronio Vasquez entered the Filipino version of "The Voice"; unfortunately, he did not qualify for the show; upon finishing dental school, he decided to sing for an American audience; and

WHEREAS, Sofronio Vasquez obtained employment on an American cruise ship in the Caribbean, performing all musical genres seven nights per week; the generosity of the Americans, yielding a lucrative income, influenced him to live in the United States; at the University of Buffalo, he discovered a program for international dental students; and

WHEREAS, On a tourist visa, Sofronio Vasquez travelled to Utica, New York, in April of 2023 and worked as a dental assistant for an oral surgeon for approximately one year; his father now deceased, the money he earned would be sent to his mother so she could have a better life in the Philippines; and

WHEREAS, When Sofronio Vasquez learned that "The Voice" was

accepting virtual auditions, he applied in August of 2023 and finally received a response the following February; that month he performed for his blind audition, and all four coaches turned their chairs within only nine seconds; and

WHEREAS, The trip to Los Angeles for the audition turned into a six-month stay as Sofronio Vasquez survived round after round on the show; the prize of \$100,000 and a recording contract were what he needed to financially care for his family and bring his mother to the United States to start a new life; and

WHEREAS, This humble, yet talented, performer dropped to his knees when his name was announced as the winner of the season; Sofronio Vasquez is the first Asian to win "The Voice," and he looks forward to the day that his mother joins him in living the American dream; and

WHEREAS, Sofronio Vasquez's achievements stand as a proud testament to what hard work and dedication can accomplish, illustrating excellence and achievement; he is known as friendly to everyone, treating them like friends and neighbors, not as mere fans; his humility and gratefulness keep him grounded and focused on the dream he had since his days in his home country; he is an inspiration to so many people who may have endured the same hardships; for that, he is truly a winner; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Sofronio Vasquez who serves as a role model, exemplifies the goal of continued excellence, and brings great pride to his community and the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Sofronio Vasquez.