

2011-K329

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the Madison Jewish Center of Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated on Sunday, May 22, 2011

WHEREAS, Religious institutions, and the many spiritual, social and educational benefits they confer, play a vital role in the development of the moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and this Nation to pay tribute to institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Madison Jewish Center of Brooklyn, New York, to be observed at its Anniversary Journal Celebration, at the Rockwood Park Jewish Center in Howard Beach, New York, on Sunday, May 22, 2011; and

WHEREAS, Madison Jewish Center (MJC), located in the heart of Brooklyn in the Madison/Marine Park neighborhood, serves the Madison, Marine Park, Sheepshead Bay and Midwood communities; and

WHEREAS, An egalitarian Conservative congregation affiliated with The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Madison Jewish Center offers a variety of programs for its congregants, including a vibrant Talmud Torah and Parents Association, Social Club, United Synagogue Youth and Kadima chapters, a Minyanaire's Club, and an active Sisterhood and, in addition, sponsors B'nai B'rith Youth Organization Chapters Ruach AZA and Ruach BBG; and

WHEREAS, Madison Jewish Center's proud history began in 1931 when 25 families rented a store on Nostrand Avenue determined to bring a Jewish Center to the Madison/Marine Park area; with President Edward I. Herbet at the helm, Madison Jewish Center was born; two years later, construction began on the new home of MJC on Nostrand Avenue off Burnett

Street; and

WHEREAS, MJC's first spiritual leader, Rabbi Mordicai I. Simkes, was engaged in 1935; by 1942 about 150 families were affiliated with the Center; the Hebrew School had four full-time teachers, including the Rabbi; a Cantor was engaged, and a volunteer choir had been formed; and WHEREAS, During World War II, Madison Jewish Center's doors were open at all hours of the day in support of the community's endeavors in the war effort; Rabbi Ralph Silverstein, who was appointed in 1945, introduced a Jewish War Veterans group, as well as an American Veterans Committee; and

WHEREAS, With a membership of over 200 families, and a school with 250 students, Madison needed to expand; on April 2, 1949, Madison Jewish Center joyfully celebrated its Chai (18th) year by beginning to build a new sanctuary; the cornerstone of the new building, adjacent to the original synagogue, was laid in 1951; and

WHEREAS, In 1952 Rabbi Joshua Lindenberg was called to the pulpit of Madison Jewish Center; during his 30 year tenure, Madison continued to grow; Cantor Leslie Rimer joined the MJC staff in 1973, adding his musical talents to the Center's services; and

WHEREAS, In 1990 President Howard Madans initiated the securing of a Holocaust Torah from Pisek, Czechoslovakia; members Elayne and Burt Schildkraut flew to England to bring the Torah back for the congregation; and

WHEREAS, On Sunday, October 7, 1990, Madison Jewish Center celebrated the return of this Torah to Judaism with a parade through the community during which the emancipated Torah was in the forefront; services in the sanctuary included not only the MJC community but the participation of

elected officials, a Catholic Monsignor and a Methodist Priest as well, further emphasizing the significance of the occasion; and

WHEREAS, Madison Jewish Center's "new" sanctuary underwent a facelift in the year 2000, getting new furniture for the bimah and restoring the

doors of the Aron Kodesh, the holy ark, continuing the dreams of the original 25 families; and

WHEREAS, As Madison Jewish Center evolved, it embraced egalitarianism, including women in every facet of its religious services, as well as in its administration; and

WHEREAS, Madison Jewish Center justly and proudly continues to be enthusiastically involved in community activities, holding Mitzvah Days, collecting food for the poor, and toys and clothing for children in local hospitals; its youth group has partnered with the Knights of Pythias to raise funds for a variety of charities, including the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and the Alzheimer's Association; and

WHEREAS, Madison Jewish Center is proud to have been at the center of Conservative Judaism in the Madison/Marine Park area for the past 80 years and plans and fervently hopes to continue as such for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, The Madison Jewish Center stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of such enduring religious institutions as the Madison Jewish Center and to bring such institutions to the attention of the people of this Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Madison Jewish Center of Brooklyn, New York, to be observed on May 22, 2011, fully confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Madison Jewish Center.