

## 2013-J2730

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring legendary fashion designer Judith Leiber upon the occasion of her designation for special recognition

WHEREAS, The quality and character of life in the Empire State are greatly enriched by the faithful and generous service of those who devote themselves to endeavors of family, faith, and community; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend individuals of such magnanimous conduct and bearing who demonstrate a deep and continuing concern for others, and in so doing, inspire others to do the same; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor legendary fashion designer Judith Leiber upon the occasion of her designation for special recognition; and

WHEREAS, Judith Leiber is not only a Holocaust survivor, but she is also the designer of unique artful handbags, 80 of which are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City; in addition, virtually each American First Lady, from 1953 onward, has carried a Judith Leiber handbag to her husband's presidential inauguration, and those handbags are now in the presidential libraries of all of those particular presidents; and

WHEREAS, Judith Leiber had to struggle to survive under the daily threat of extermination posed by the terrifying Nazi occupation of Budapest during World War II; while she proved determined and resourceful in saving the lives of her family and herself, she also managed to learn the intricate craft of designing and making a handbag from conception to finished product; and

WHEREAS, When the war finally ended, Judith Leiber met an American GI, Gerson Leiber, on the war torn streets of Budapest; they had a whirlwind

courtship and were married within the year and while still in Budapest, Gerson began his formal art training at the Royal Academy of Art; and WHEREAS, When the Leibers arrived in New York City, they were a pair of ambitious dreamers; Gerson wanted to succeed as an artist, and Judith wanted to design handbags; and

WHEREAS, Gerson studied at the Art Student's League and learned to paint in virtually every modern style; Judith took jobs with fashion houses and most of her time was spent working for America's then most esteemed fashion designer, Nettie Rosenstein, the woman who created the little black dress; and

WHEREAS, Judith Leiber's reputation for creativity and uniquely beautiful designs was rapidly spreading amongst the arbiters of fashion; her handbags were featured in VOGUE and HARPER'S BAZAAR, as well as other top-flight fashion magazines; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in 1953, every First Lady, from Mamie Eisenhower on, has carried a Judith Leiber handbag to her husband's inauguration; in the world of high fashion handbags, Judith was known as the only person who could design and make a handbag from conception to magnificent finished product, and each bag was considered a unique work of art; and

WHEREAS, In East Hampton, New York, the Leibers have built a magnificent Palladian-style museum on seven acres of beautiful gardens; the museum is currently displaying 500 Judith Leiber handbags, representing 50 years of her amazing career; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to extend its highest commendation to Judith Leiber for her dedication and commitment to her community and her heritage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor legendary fashion designer Judith Leiber upon the occasion of her designation for special recognition; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-

mitted to Judith Leiber.