

## 2013-J3880

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl posthumously upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl posthumously upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Senate Liberty Medal was created in 2000 and is awarded to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl was instrumental in providing the United States with situational awareness of the Jews in Europe, specifically regarding Auschwitz, the largest and most notorious of the Nazi concentration camp networks, which ultimately led to a halt to the deportations of the remaining Hungarian Jewry; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl's daring efforts to save the Jews of Slovakia from extermination at the hands of the Nazis during the Holocaust included helping to establish the "Working Group," an under-

ground organization which raised funds to negotiate ransom with German and Slovakian officials in order to delay mass deportations and, via the famous Europa Plan, to secure the release of Jews; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl was also able to smuggle letters and telegrams to leaders with abilities he hoped would help save the Jews of Europe, including President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill and alerting them to the progressive Nazi destruction of European Jewry; in addition, he provided actionable intel in terms of where the railroads and crematoriums should be bombed; and

WHEREAS, The courage, wisdom and tenacity of this determined man laid the groundwork for several rescue missions, including the Mantello Mission, and the Wallenberg Mission, which freed tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl's combined actions, by some accounts, has amounted to being responsible for as many as two-thirds of the Holocaust survivors living in Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, Today, more than 55 years after his death, the bravery and willingness of Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl to fight for the lives of his fellow human beings, and to secure the very existence of future generations of European Jews, continues to inspire, and is deserving of the highest honor by all defenders of freedom; and

WHEREAS, Individuals such as Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl devoted to improving the quality of life for others, enabling them to build lives of dignity and self-worth are deserving of the highest praise and recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl posthumously upon the occasion of his

designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl.