

2013-K1070

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata upon the occasion of their retirement from the Board of Directors of Fortunate Families and celebrating the tenth anniversary of their founding the organization

WHEREAS, The character and richness of religious and community life in this noble Empire State is nourished and fulfilled through the faithful concern and selfless devotion of those who would commit their energies and purpose to the ministry, support and enfranchisement of others; and WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata upon the occasion of their retirement from the Board of Directors of Fortunate Families and to also commemorate the tenth anniversary of their founding of this esteemed organization, to be celebrated at a ceremony in Rochester, New York, on Saturday, May 3, 2014; and

WHEREAS, In 2004, Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata founded Fortunate Families, a nonprofit organization which offers support and counseling to Catholic parents of gay and lesbian children; for the past decade, it has served as a resource network for the promotion of meaningful dialogue between parishes, pastors, and bishops on the issues of homosexuality within the Catholic community; and

WHEREAS, The parents of four children, including one gay son, Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata have compassionately ministered to Catholic families with LGBTQ sons and daughters working to facilitate the process of acceptance and affirmation; and

WHEREAS, Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata previously founded the Catholic Gay and Lesbian Ministry in the Diocese of Rochester and have also worked to organize ministries at the national level; in addition, they are charter members of the Catholic Parents Network; and

WHEREAS, This pioneering couple has made presentations at numerous religious events in the name of tolerance, and has written extensively on the subject; they are the authors of FORTUNATE FAMILIES: CATHOLIC PARENTS WITH LESBIAN DAUGHTERS AND GAY SONS; furthermore, Casey Lopata is the editor of SEEDS OF HOPE and MORE SEEDS, resource manuals for compassionate ministering to the GLBT community; and

WHEREAS, Throughout its ten years of devoted ministry, Fortunate Families has strived to build a more welcoming church and society, seeking equality for the families it represents; and

WHEREAS, In 2005, Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata received the New Ways Ministry's Bridge Building Award in recognition of their outstanding work on behalf of Catholic gays and lesbians and their families; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable couple has brought to their ministry an overwhelming spirit of justice and compassion, acting with great empathy in conducting their mission, while always displaying the highest standards of personal integrity and dedication; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals and organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention it is appropriate to publicly and jubilantly proclaim and commend them for the edification of others; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata upon the occasion of their retirement from the Board of Directors of Fortunate Families and celebrating the tenth anniversary of their founding of the organization; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata.