

## 2013-J5012

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Homeless Alliance of Western New York upon the occasion of celebrating its 22nd Anniversary of serving the Buffalo community and Western New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations which and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Homeless Alliance of Western New York upon the occasion of celebrating its 22nd Anniversary of serving the Buffalo community and Western New York; and

WHEREAS, In 1992, the Erie County Legislature created the Erie County Commission on Homelessness to find ways to reduce homelessness in Erie County; eight years later, the commission was incorporated as the Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY); and

WHEREAS, In 2013, HAWNY merged with the Niagara County Continuum of Care and it is now the Continuum of Care Lead for Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Erie and Niagara Counties; they are also the Homeless Management Information System Lead for these communities and Cattaraugus County; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY has brought a significant amount in HUD funds over the last five years to providers who serve those experiencing homelessness which has helped to serve over 25,000 clients; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY has developed Opening Doors: Buffalo and Erie County Plan to End Homelessness, and are currently working with their partners to implement this plan; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY is an alliance of over 100 partners ranging from service providers, government agencies, and the private sector all dedicated to helping those who experience homelessness; and

WHEREAS, The partners which make up the Homeless Alliance provide over 1,100 permanent supportive housing beds, 500 transitional housing beds, and over 500 emergency shelter beds in Erie and Niagara Counties; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY truly represents Western New York and recently merged with Niagara County in 2013 to provide a regional approach to ending homelessness; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY co-sponsored an Opportunities and Challenges Bus Tour of Buffalo neighborhoods with the Partnership for Public Good which showed the effects of disinvestment in parts of Buffalo and opportunities for growth; last year, 360 people took part and enjoyed these bus tours; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY has co-sponsored a Poverty Workshop in Niagara County along with the Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless which was attended by 150 participants; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY co-sponsored the 5th Annual Poverty Research Conference with the Partnership for Public Good and SUNY Buffalo's Office of Civic Engagement & Public Policy Research Initiative which was attended by over 200 participants; and

WHEREAS, HAWNY also co-sponsored Unheard Voices with the Ujima Company and the Partnership for the Public Good where three low wage workers tell their stories of life and working in poverty; two of these performances have been given and attended by over 200 people; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, HAWNY is a proud sponsor and organizer of Hands Across Buffalo, an event dedicated to promoting racial unity and a community commitment to better understanding race and poverty; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious event, to be held May 17, 2014, will feature 7,000 people joining hands across the length of Ferry Street from the Niagara River to Bailey Avenue, a location chosen because it crosses

several racially and economically diverse neighborhoods and due to its rich history, including the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to commend HAWNY, the leading advocate for those experiencing homelessness and poverty in Erie and Niagara Counties, for all they do for the betterment of their community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Homeless Alliance of Western New York upon the occasion of celebrating its 22nd Anniversary of serving the Buffalo community and Western New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Homeless Alliance of Western New York.