

2015-J2865

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring the Town of Bethlehem's Recycling Department upon the occasion of its designation as recipient of the 2015 United States Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Champion Award on April 24, 2015

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to duly recognize and commend those businesses of high purpose and dedicated service within the State of New York which are committed to the vital work of environmental preservation; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its longstanding traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor the Town of Bethlehem's Recycling Department upon the occasion of its designation as recipient of the 2015 United States Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Champion Award, celebrated on Friday, April 24, 2015, in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Nearly six months after helping to launch the statewide Re-Clothe NY, the Town of Bethlehem's Recycling Department was honored with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) highest recognition, the Environmental Champion Award; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious award was presented to the New York State Association of Reduction, Reuse and Recycling for the Re-Clothe NY campaign, and was proudly accepted by Campaign Coordinator, Dan Rain, on its behalf; and

WHEREAS, This vital organization won the award for its efforts to publicize awareness of the need to recycle textiles; it is believed more than one billion pounds of textile materials, with a market value of over \$200 million, is thrown out each year; and

WHEREAS, The EPA found that Re-Clothe NY campaign produced an innovative set of public communication tools, including a website with a

searchable database of textile drop off locations, and a media relations tool kit and social media platforms; and

WHEREAS, The original idea began when Dan Rain realized that not just wearable clothing could be recycled or reused, but all types of textiles, including linen, shoes, curtains, and stuffed animals; and

WHEREAS, Re-Clothe NY was launched as a collaborative effort between the New York State Association of Reduction, Reuse and Recycling (NYSAR3), Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) and the Council for Textile Recycling (CTR); the first large collection took place on America Recycles Day in November 2014, and more than 100,000 pounds of materials were recycled and kept out of landfills; and

WHEREAS, Bethlehem, New York, residents have participated in two major recycling events since the campaign was launched; in that time the town has recycled more than 54,900 pounds of textiles; and

WHEREAS, In Albany County alone, it is estimated that 21 million pounds of clothes and other textiles, with \$3.7 million value, are trashed every year; after implementing the Re-Clothe NY campaign, the County had their first textile collection on April 18, 2015; and

WHEREAS, New York State is the only state in the Nation to undertake such an extensive campaign, focusing on recycling textile materials, and developing resources to provide a turn-key template for any state, municipality or town to raise awareness, and increase diversion of this valuable and untapped reuse and recycling resource; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Bethlehem's Recycling Department has truly proven itself to be an industry leader in "green" efforts and initiatives; it has continuously strived to be an environmentally-friendly municipal citizen and will continue to look for and adapt new measures to increase sustainability; and

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon all citizens to recognize and applaud the efforts of businesses such as the Town of Bethlehem's Recycling Department, whose proprietors and staff work tirelessly to protect our

natural surroundings for the benefit of present and future generations of New Yorkers; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the Town of Bethlehem's Recycling Department upon the occasion of its designation as recipient of the 2015 United States Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Champion Award; and be it further
RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dan Rain, Coordinator, Town of Bethlehem Recycling Department.