

## 2015-J3164

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending James B. DeStefano upon the occasion of his retirement after 35 years of distinguished service to Access: Supports for Living Inc.

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor the significant milestones in the distinguished careers of esteemed individuals whose lives have been committed to the pursuit of excellence and who bring great pride to the citizens of our great State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend James B. DeStefano upon the occasion of his retirement after 35 years of distinguished service to Access: Supports for Living Inc.; and

WHEREAS, On Tuesday, December 1, 2015, James B. DeStefano officially retired from the esteemed roles of both Executive Vice President and Director of External Affairs and Development at Access: Supports for Living Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Access: Supports for Living Inc. serves over 8,000 individuals a year, and employs over 1,300 staff members; currently, this vital organization provides services and employment in nine counties including Orange, Sullivan, Dutchess, Ulster, Greene, Columbia, Rockland, Putnam and Westchester; and

WHEREAS, James B. DeStefano began his esteemed career with Access: Supports for Living Inc., formerly known as Occupations, Inc., over three decades ago; for 13 years, he held the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer, before being promoted to the rank of President and Chief Executive Officer, a title he held for over 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his tenure, James B. DeStefano has led multi-mil-

lion dollar physical plant renovations, operated services in more than 63 locations, expanded organizational operations, and successfully managed and inspired a talented senior leadership team; and

WHEREAS, Under James B. DeStefano's luminous leadership, Access: Supports for Living Inc. has accomplished numerous objectives including the development of four affordable housing complexes in the Towns of Wallkill, Monticello, and New Windsor, New York, for people with diverse disabilities; the creation of 350 community employment opportunities for hundreds of people including over 90 jobs at West Point through contracts with the federal government; the addition of behavioral health treatment services in Orange and Dutchess Counties for over 3,000 people; the implementation of foster care and children and family services serving high need youth throughout the region; the creation of Mobile Mental Health Services in Orange and Ulster Counties; and fostered a partnership with industrial businesses which provide employment for people with disabilities and support the infrastructure of the agency; and

WHEREAS, James B. DeStefano has been recognized as an industry leader in the implementation of AbilityOne contracts which employ people with disabilities; he has led and inspired from a personal value system and has a passion for integration of person-centered outcomes for people living with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, A strong and respected leader in the field of rehabilitation, James B. DeStefano was the 1997 recipient of the Crystal Run Village Community Service Award, and the 2001 recipient of the NISH East Person of the Year Award; on September 30, 2015, he was presented with the New York State Rehabilitation Association (NYSRA) Adrien Levy Award; and

WHEREAS, James B. DeStefano received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Edinboro State College, and then obtained his Master's degree in

Counseling and Personnel Service from the University of Missouri in 1972; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individ-

uals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend James B. DeStefano upon the occasion of his retirement after 35 years of distinguished service to Access: Supports for Living Inc., and to wish him continued success in all his future endeavors; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to James B. DeStefano.