

2017-J194

Senate Resolution No. 194

BY: Senator PARKER

COMMEMORATING the 134th Anniversary of the
Brooklyn Bridge

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to support the preservation and commemoration of historical landmarks which express and preserve the social and cultural origins of this great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Uniting the maze of 19th century brick and frame residences, factories and warehouses of the Brooklyn shore to the modern skyscraper district of lower Manhattan, the majestic highway known as the Brooklyn Bridge opened to traffic on May 24, 1883; 134 years later, the Brooklyn Bridge continues to retain its place as the most picturesque of the 61 spans that bind New York into a world metropolis and a timeless inspiration for artists, writers and photographers; and

WHEREAS, It is with great pride that this Legislative Body commemorates the 134th Anniversary of the Brooklyn Bridge; the graceful sweep of its span is supported by a delicate web of steel cables fixed on soaring Gothic stone arches; in this structure, as in no other, one sees a growing America's reach towards the future and its exploration of expansionism through invention, transcending its European roots to become an American icon of national inspiration; and

WHEREAS, David Bernard Steinman would tell his fellow newsboys, "someday I am going to build bridges like that famous structure towering above us"; although his friends may have laughed then, that young man went on to become the nation's preeminent bridge designer/engineer and leading expert on the aerodynamics of suspension bridges, designing 400 bridges around the world, including the Brooklyn Bridge; and

WHEREAS, Its builders, John, Emily and Washington Roebling were heroic figures; having been so moved by the personal tragedy, history and engineering innovations and consumed by the building of the Brooklyn Bridge, in 1945 David B. Steinman published *The Builders of the Bridge: The Story of John Roebling and His Son*; and

WHEREAS, To artists and architects alike, the design of the Brooklyn Bridge evokes a balanced display of conflicting forces, simple yet complex, elegant yet bold, substantial yet buoyant; in fact, at the opening ceremony, the Bridge was described as: "this alluring roadway, resting on towers which rise like those of ancient cathedrals, lacework of threads interweaving their separate delicate strengths into the complex solidity of the whole"; and

WHEREAS, In 1945, David Steinman's childhood dream became reality when he was hired by the City of New York to oversee the rehabilitation of the Brooklyn Bridge; the comprehensive reconstruction project took place between 1944 and 1954 and entailed strengthening the inner and outer trusses, installing new horizontal stays between the four main cables, removing the railroad and trolley tracks, widening the roadways from two to three lanes in each direction and constructing new approach ramps; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Brooklyn Bridge accommodates six lanes of

automobile traffic carrying approximately 145,000 vehicles per day with a separate walkway along the centerline for pedestrians and bicycles; and

WHEREAS, The Brooklyn Bridge received its designation as a National Historic Landmark in 1964 and on its 100th Anniversary, the American Society of Civil Engineers designated the Bridge a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark; and

WHEREAS, The construction of a building, in its historical perspective, symbolizes the will, the circumstances and the resolve of a people and a community; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the Brooklyn Bridge's rich history and enduring contribution to the heritage of the State of New York, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to join in the celebration of its 134th Anniversary so that present and future generations may come to appreciate the unique significance which its history plays in the progression of our State and Nation's evolution; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 134th Anniversary of the Brooklyn Bridge, as well as recognize its significant history, its innovative engineering achievements and its dynamic symbolism of America's westward march; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Eric Adams, President of the Borough of Brooklyn.