

2017-J1387

Senate Resolution No. 1387

BY: Senator AVELLA

COMMENDING the Oratorio Society of Queens, Inc.
upon the occasion of celebrating its 90th
Anniversary on May 21, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those musical organizations that have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Oratorio Society of Queens, Inc. upon the occasion of its 90th Anniversary to be celebrated at its Annual Spring Concert on Sunday, May 21, 2017, in the Queensborough Performing Arts Center at Queensborough Community College in Bayside, New York; and

WHEREAS, The chorus began as the Oratorio Society of Flushing, and was later incorporated as the Oratorio Society of Queens (OSQ); the chorus is comprised of 100 members of all ages, faiths and ethnic groups; the roster includes both active and retired educators, lawyers, health professionals, engineers, homemakers, secretaries, writers, librarians, computer wizards, artists and students; and

WHEREAS, The OSQ is the oldest performing cultural organization in the borough; it was established in 1927, by a group of Flushing

residents who loved to sing; its inception preceded completion of the subway (the No. 7 line) in 1931, and the Triboro Bridge in 1940; and

WHEREAS, For 90 years, the OSQ has strived to engage, educate and uplift the Queens community by presenting musical programs which span the repertoire from great choral masterpieces to popular all-time favorites; and

WHEREAS, Through the Great Depression and World War II, the chorus continued to rehearse and perform, contributing to life as usual in the most extraordinary of times; the founders of the organization did not think of Queens as a place to sleep when they were not working in Manhattan, but rather as a place to live; churches, temples, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and performing arts centers were built to enhance the quality of life in the borough; and

WHEREAS, This vital organization accomplishes their mission by providing its diverse membership of volunteer singers with joy-filled rehearsal and exhilarating performance experiences which expand their musical abilities; offering opportunities for local high school and college students to learn music theory, voice production, stage presence and civic responsibility by attending regular rehearsals and performing with the chorus, professional soloists and orchestra; and presenting Holiday and Spring concerts which are widely-recognized as the premier choice for Queens audiences who want to hear excellent choral music; and

WHEREAS, The OSQ traditionally presents a Holiday Concert featuring Part I of Handel's "Messiah" along with a selection of holiday favorites and a Spring Concert; its vast repertoire includes many classic choral

compositions such as Verdi's "Requiem," Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony," Rutter's "Magnificat," Mozart's "Requiem" and Rossini's "Stabat Mater";

and

WHEREAS, The OSQ has thrilled thousands with exciting, high-quality musical events at numerous venues throughout New York City and Long Island including the Queensborough Performing Arts Center, Bayside High School, St. Andrew Avellino Church, the Cross Island Y, Temple Beth Sholom, Christ the King High School, Temple Beth-Am, Queens Terrace on the Park, Flushing Meadow Park, Forest Park Bandshell, Trinity Lutheran Church, Maria Regina Convent, Bethany Baptist Church, and the Reform Temple of Forest Hills, as well as the Immaculate Conception Center; and

WHEREAS, For 45 years, the OSQ has been led by Artistic Director, David W. Close, an all-around splendid musician, conductor, concert pianist, organist, music director, former opera coach at Queens College, composer, arranger and teacher; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous leadership of President of the Board of Directors, Charlene DeGregoria, the OSQ continues its cultural mission of sharing a love of classical choral music with its friends and neighbors throughout Queens; and

WHEREAS, It is most fitting that we take time to celebrate the arts of our Nation, to honor our artists, and to express our appreciation to everyone who patronizes the arts; and as we celebrate the arts, we celebrate and give thanks to our American freedom, the only atmosphere in which artists can truly create and in which art is truly the expression of the soul; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Oratorio Society of Queens, Inc. upon the occasion of celebrating its 90th Anniversary; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to David W. Close, Artistic Director, and Charlene DeGregoria, President, Oratorio Society of Queens, Inc. Board of Directors.