

## 2017-J3098

Senate Resolution No. 3098

BY: Senator BRESLIN

COMMEMORATING the 50th Anniversary of the FOCUS Churches of Albany to be celebrated on October 28, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the custom 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 and individuals who are devoted 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 commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the FOCUS Churches of Albany to be celebrated with a Gala on Saturday, October 28, 2017, at St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, Albany, New York; and

WHEREAS, In 1967, a concerned group of clergy, church members and citizens joined together to address the needs of the hungry and homeless in Albany; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing that one church, or group of individuals, could not successfully address these issues alone, the FOCUS churches joined together; and

WHEREAS, Today, under the able leadership of one of the founding pastors, Reverend Robert Lamar; Bishop Howard Hubbard; Executive Director, Reverend Jim Ketcham; and President of the Board of Directors, Reverend Jeffrey Matthews, there are six covenant churches, six interfaith food pantry affiliates, and numerous other faith communities who support the work and mission of FOCUS; and

WHEREAS, The Covenant Congregations include: Delmar Reformed, Emmanuel Baptist, First Church in Albany, First Presbyterian, Trinity United Methodist, and Westminster Presbyterian; and

WHEREAS, The Interfaith Food Pantry Affiliates include: Congregation Beth Emeth, Albany Unitarian Universalist, Islamic Center of the Capital District, New Covenant Presbyterian, St. Andrew's Episcopal, and Sikh Community; and

WHEREAS, As the needs of the community have grown, so have the array of services provided by FOCUS Churches of Albany; in 2016, the Breakfast Program, which began in 1984, served an average of 104 individuals three days a week during the cold months and 51 twice a week during the warmer months; and the Interfaith Food Pantry, created in 1976, provided meals for an average of 317 households per month; and

WHEREAS, Additional vital services offered by FOCUS Churches of Albany last year include: the advocacy on social justice issues to end hunger and poverty; providing over 150 children with school supplies in the fall, and "Gardening in a Bucket for Kids" promoting healthy eating habits by learning to grow their own vegetables; and

WHEREAS, The FOCUS Churches of Albany is a solid cornerstone of the community, and stands ready to continue its important mission of addressing the needs of the hungry and homeless in Albany for many years

to come; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize those organizations which enhance the well-being and vitality of their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the FOCUS Churches of Albany to be celebrated on October 28, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Reverend Robert Lamar, Bishop Howard Hubbard, Reverend Jim Ketcham, and Reverend Jeffrey Matthews.