

## 2017-K1316

Assembly Resolution No. 1316

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COMMEMORATING the 50th Anniversary of the New York  
State Defenders Association

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those organizations within our midst which have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals and organizations it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the New York State Defenders Association; and

WHEREAS, Founded on September 12, 1967, the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA) was among the first statewide public defense organizations created after the United States Supreme Court's landmark decision declaring that all people have the right to counsel regardless of their ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, Remaining true to its mission, NYSDA has established standards to improve the quality and scope of publicly supported legal

representation to low income people, encouraging innovations in practice and thought, and engaging in a statewide program of community legal education; and

WHEREAS, NYSDA, the largest criminal defense bar association in New York State, provides access to resources for those actively engaged in criminal and adult family court representation; and

WHEREAS, Since 1981, NYSDA has operated the Public Defense Backup Center in Albany, New York; through the Backup Center, NYSDA offers a number of services to more than 6,000 public defenders, conflict defenders, legal aid society lawyers, and private attorneys accepting court appointed cases across the State; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, the Public Defense Backup Center provides excellent support and fosters well-trained defense attorneys who reduce delay, unnecessary incarceration and claims of ineffective representation which can result in costly reversals and retrials; and

WHEREAS, NYSDA developed and supports the Public Defense Case Management System (PDCMS) which is used by 71 public defense offices in 46 counties to efficiently manage cases and serve clients more effectively; and

WHEREAS, NYSDA has also initiated a number of special projects to enhance public defense representation and justice system reform; its Veterans Defense Program strives to assist defense lawyers in identifying and presenting evidence connected to clients' military experience; and

WHEREAS, Defending those who defended America, the Veterans Defense

Program, established in 2014, provides a treatment-oriented mitigation approach leading to family restoration and reintegration into society; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, NYSDA offers pre-entry mentoring for individuals facing incarceration, as well as Restorative Practice training and support services; and

WHEREAS, Over its distinguished 50-year history, the New York State Defenders Association has demonstrated continuous service to the residents and communities which it serves; and

WHEREAS, The success of the New York State Defenders Association is in direct correlation to the efforts of its dedicated members, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors on behalf of the organization and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by 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 New York State Defenders Association; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the New York State Defenders Association, Albany, New York.