



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0999-2003, **Version:** *

Res. No. 999

Resolution honoring the life and legend of Celia Cruz.

By Council Members Serrano, Perkins, Rivera, Katz, Weprin, Quinn, The Speaker (Council Member Miller), Avella, Baez, Espada, Jr., Felder, Fidler, Gallagher, Gerson, Gioia, Jennings, Liu, Martinez, McMahon, Monserrate, Moskowitz, Nelson, Provenzano, Reed, Sanders, Jr., Seabrook, Sears, Vallone, Jr., Vann, Barron, Clarke, Comrie, Foster, Recchia, DeBlasio, Gonzalez, Reyna, Boyland and Gennaro

Whereas, Celia Cruz, the indelible queen of Afro-Cuban and salsa music, died on July 16, 2003; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz was a preeminent musician and performer who was adored by fans around the globe, recognized through numerous awards and distinctions, and respected and admired by her peers; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz not only dedicated her life to sharing her musical talent, contagious energy and love of life with the world, but, in a manner that was as understated as her stage presence was larger-than-life, she worked tirelessly to help secure better futures for Latino youth by sponsoring musical scholarships and mentoring young artists; and
Whereas, Although commonly known as salsa music, Ms. Cruz's musical range and roots rested in such diverse Afro-Cuban and other Cuban musical forms as charanga, guaracha, rumba, son, santería chants, cha-cha and mambo; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz was born into a family of 14 children in the humble neighborhood of Santo Suárez, La Habana, Cuba, where she sang lullabies to her siblings, and it is said that she earned her first pair of shoes by singing for a tourist; and
Whereas, After winning a radio contest, Ms. Cruz eventually studied music at the Conservatorio Internacional de Música, in La Habana, and went on to join Cuba's most popular band, La Sonora Matancera; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz left Cuba in 1960, following the Cuban Revolution, never to return; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz settled in the United States in 1961; and
Whereas, In collaborating with such musicians as Tito Puente, Willie Colón, Johnny Pacheco, Ray Barretto and Rubén Blades and performing with the Fania All-Stars, Ms. Cruz incorporated Puerto Rican, Dominican and other musical elements into her own musical style; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz's musical artistry helped give birth to modern-day salsa music; and
Whereas, Ms. Cruz received 13 Grammy nominations, winning two, and received six Latin Grammy nominations, winning three; and
Whereas, Included among the many other awards and honors bestowed upon Ms. Cruz over the course of her career, she received an honorary doctorate from Yale University, was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Bill Clinton, and was further honored when Little Havana's main street, Calle Ocho, was renamed as Celia Cruz Way; and
Whereas, Through her perseverance, determination, style and incomparable talent, Ms. Cruz broke through the considerable barriers she faced as a Latina woman, and as a black woman, in particular, to share with the world the great and remarkable gifts with which she was graced; and
Whereas, As Ms. Cruz shared in an interview with The New York Times, "[w]hen people hear me sing, I want them to be happy, happy, happy. I don't want them thinking about when there's not any money, or when there's fighting at home. My message is always felicidad - happiness"; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York honors the life and legend of Celia Cruz.

LCG
LS No.2858
8/13/2003

[1013]

[1013]