Res. No. 841

Resolution designating April 6 annually as Lubavitcher Rebbe Day in the City of New York to honor Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson for his remarkable life and lasting legacy

By Council Members Hudson, Brannan, Banks and Brewer

Whereas, Born in 1902, Menachem Mendel Schneerson came to New York as a Ukrainian immigrant during World War II; and

Whereas, In 1951, he became the seventh Rebbe of the Chabad Lubavitch movement, which originated in Russia over 250 years ago, when he succeeded his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, who appointed him; and

Whereas, The Rebbe was responsible for transforming Chabad Lubavitch into the largest of the Hasidic movements established in the United States (U.S.) after the Holocaust, with over 6,000 emissaries, known as *shluchim*, in all 50 states and more than 100 countries; and

Whereas, Speaking at the International Conference of Shluchim on November 20, 2011, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks of the United Kingdom noted, while considering whether "you can redeem a world that had witnessed Hitler," that "the Rebbe did something absolutely extraordinary, he said to himself: if the Nazis searched out every Jew in hate, we will search out every Jew in love"; and

Whereas, According to New York State Senate Resolution Number (NYS Sen. Res. No.) 545, sponsored by State Senator Zellnor Myrie and adopted on March 25, 2025, the Rebbe was a "towering figure in 20th-century Jewish life and one of the most influential Jewish leaders in modern history," who launched "a global movement with institutions and followers across the world"; and

Whereas, According to NYS Sen. Res. No. 545, the Rebbe's "vision was characterized by a deep

commitment to Jewish education, outreach, and the spiritual renewal of Jewish communities worldwide," and his "wisdom…resonated with people across diverse Jewish denominations and also non-Jews"; and

Whereas, According to NYS Sen. Res. No. 545, the Rebbe "emphasized that every small, everyday act of goodness and care has the potential to elevate that world and bring us closer to a more compassionate society…whether…through offering a smile to a stranger, helping a neighbor, or simply showing respect and love for all people"; and

Whereas, The Rebbe, who had suffered several strokes, passed away on June 12, 1994, at the age of 92 at Beth Israel Medical Center in Manhattan; and

Whereas, Amidst thousands of mourners, who had come from all over the world, he was buried in Queens at Old Montefiore Cemetery, next to his father-in-law and close to the women in his family, including his wife, Chaya Moussia, who had passed away in 1988; and

Whereas, According to *The New York Times*, mourners at the cemetery said Kaddish and El Moleh Rachamim, the Hebrew prayer for the dead, but there was no eulogy because "officials said that no speech could possibly convey the rabbi's nature or his meaning to the Lubavitch movement"; and

Whereas, New York City, New York State, U.S., and world leaders paid their respects upon the Rebbe's death, as government leaders continue to do when visiting the Ohel, which is Hebrew for "tent" and which is the Rebbe's gravesite at the cemetery; and

Whereas, The Ohel, along with the vistors' center housing videos of the Rebbe and located on the outer perimeter of the cemetery, draws about one million visitors annually from around the world and is the most visited religious site in Judaism outside of Israel; and

Whereas, It is customary for visitors to write down prayers and requests, known as *pidyonai nefeshot*, on blank sheets of paper and, upon entering the actual gravesite, to rip up their notes and throw them into the paper-lined pit surrounding the grave; and

Whereas, It is fitting to honor Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, for his role as a

prominent leader for decades in New York City's Jewish community and that his leadership be recognized by the co-naming of Presidents Street in Brooklyn, where he lived with his wife, as "Lubavitcher Rebbe Way," as commemorated with a co-naming ceremony on April 6, 2025; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York designates April 6 annually as Lubavitcher Rebbe Day in the City of New York to honor Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson for his remarkable life and lasting legacy.

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