

Maestro José Antonio Abreu is a very versatile and accomplished individual. He is a politician, an activist, economist, educator, a Venezuelan pianist and most notably the conductor of the Venezuelan Youth Orchestra; and

WHEREAS: *A native of Valera, Venezuela, Maestro Abreu began his career in music by studying with Doralisa Jiménez de Medina in Barquisimeto, and he later attended the Caracas Musical Declamation Academy (known today as “José Ángel Lamas”). In 1961, he received his Ph.D. in Petroleum Economics from the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello. He also studied at the University of Michigan. He was also a professor of the Economy and the Law faculties at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello and the Universidad Simón Bolívar. He has also served as a delegate to the Venezuelan Congress; and*

WHEREAS: *In 1975, Maestro Abreu founded the Symphony Orchestra Simon Bolívar and the National Symphony Youth Orchestra (NSYO). Under the direction of Maestro Abreu, the NYSYO flourished and led to the establishment of youth orchestras in other Venezuelan States, which has since become the National System of Children and Youth Orchestras of Venezuela, under the auspices of the State Foundation, FESNOJIV. Maestro Abreu has been the Director of the Foundation since its establishment in 1994; and*

WHEREAS: *Today, more than 250,000 Venezuelans participate in 120 youth orchestras, 60 children’s orchestras and a network of choirs, with musical training starting from the age of two. The orchestras are based on 75 “orchestral cells” around the country, each with at least one orchestra, and the System also includes workshops in which children learn to build and repair instruments, special programs for children with disabilities or learning difficulties, and specialist centers or institutes for phonology, audiovisuals and higher musical education; and*

WHEREAS: *Maestro Abreu’s visionary leadership has not only created these orchestral groups, but a social movement of tremendous dimensions explicitly oriented towards lower-income populations. As seen in the documentary “Tocar Y Luchar,” the captivating story of the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela and the nationwide school music program, the enormous impact that these programs have had on young people is an inspirational example of the importance of music education in New York City schools; now, therefore*

BE IT KNOWN: *That, I, G. Oliver Koppell, Council Member of the 11th District, am proud to join the distinguished members and supporters of the Youth Orchestra of Venezuela in honoring*

Maestro José Antonio Abreu

for his extraordinary contributions to the cultural life of our Nation and for spreading harmony throughout the world.

Signed this the 6th day of June in the year Two Thousand and Eight.

G. OLIVER KOPPELL
Council Member, 11th District
Bronx