

**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**LEGISLATURE OF ERIE COUNTY**

**BUFFALO, N.Y., APRIL 14, 2016**

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION IN REMEMBRANCE OF  
JANICE “MISS JAN” PETERS**

**WHEREAS**, Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, on April 10, 2016, removed from our midst Janice Peters, in whose death we have lost a sincere and loyal friend, as well as a valued and respected citizen, and whose family has lost a kind and devoted member; and

**WHEREAS**, Jan Peters was born in Augsburg, Germany and moved with her family to Long Island, New York at an early age where she lived for four years; her family then moved to Rome, New York where she completed middle school and graduated from Rome Free Academy High School; and

**WHEREAS**, Miss Jan earned a Bachelor’s Degree in History from the University at Buffalo in 1968, then completed a Master’s Degree in Urban Studies at Occidental College in Los Angeles, and was selected as a National Urban Fellow in 1974 and interned for a year as Executive Assistant to Mayor Coleman Young in Detroit; and

**WHEREAS**, following graduate school and her work in Detroit, Miss Jan returned to Buffalo and served as director of the Buffalo Community Development Organization, Special Assistant to Buffalo’s Commissioner of Human Resources, Director of the Public Service Careers Program for Buffalo’s Model Cities Agency, Assistant Coordinator for the Day Care Council of Erie County, and Assistant Director of Research and Development for the Opportunities Development Corp; Jan also was an Instructor at Buffalo State College and Millard Fillmore College at UB, where she taught classes in Black History, English and the social dynamics of poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1977, Miss Jan was hired as the Director of the Neighborhood House Association, a settlement house founded in 1893 and based in Buffalo’s Fruit Belt neighborhood. Four years later, she successfully implemented its merger with Westminster Community House, another Buffalo settlement house that was founded in 1894. The merged organization became the Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers (BFNC); and

**WHEREAS**, Miss Peters oversaw the growth of BFNC to become one of the area’s leading human service agencies, developing programs to help those with mental illness,

developmental disabilities and addiction. She also established the Moot Senior Citizens' Center adjacent to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; and

**WHEREAS**, Jan believed in the potential within every individual and in “guided” empowerment – she was willing to invest in people others had turned away, or simply needed an extra hand after falling on hard times; affectionately called “Miss Jan” and “Miss Peters” by nearby residents of the Fruit Belt, she regularly helped neighborhood residents find work, support or just offered a listening ear; and

**WHEREAS**, Miss Jan was elected to the Buffalo School Board in 1995, representing the Central District where she chaired several committees and was Board Liaison to the Joint Schools Construction Board; she was then promoted to fill the Rev. Darius Pridgen’s at-large seat when he left the board in 2002 serving as the board’s Vice President; and

**WHEREAS**, Miss Peters was a founding member and first President of the Buffalo Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, President and Treasurer of the Community Enterprise Federal Credit Union, and President of the Housing Assistance Center of the Niagara Frontier. She also served on the boards of numerous community organizations, from the Pratt-Willert Revitalization Corp. to Leadership Buffalo, and she also was active in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; and

**WHEREAS**, Miss Jan Peters received many honors, including service awards from Second Temple Baptist Church, Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church, the Martin Luther King Steering Committee and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Miss Jan was also awarded the 1987 YWCA Toast of Buffalo Award, the 1988 Buffalo News’ Citizen of the Year Award, the 1991 YWCA Leadership Award, the 1992 NCCJ Sisterhood Award, the 1992 Everywoman Opportunity Center Award, and the 1994 Buffalo NAACP Human Relations Award.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

**RESOLVED**, that Miss Jan was known by leaders from across Western New York as a tough, committed colleague, peer, partner and adversary. Her kindness, intelligence and steadfast advocacy on behalf of those needing a voice made her an unforgettable Buffalo personality and presence; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Erie County Legislature does hereby mourn the passing of Janice Peters and pause in its deliberations to honor and celebrate the Life of Miss Jan, and offer our thoughts, prayers and deepest sympathy to Miss Peters’ family, friends, and colleagues.

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**Hon. Barbara Miller-Williams**  
*Erie County Legislator, 1<sup>st</sup> District*

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**Karen M. McCarthy**  
*Clerk of the Erie County Legislature*