

2011-K814

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, A lifelong resident of Highland Falls, New York, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff died on Monday, December 26, 2011, at the age of 81; and

WHEREAS, Affectionately known to all as Connie, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff was the son of a Georgian prince who sought asylum in the United States following the Bolshevik invasion of the Republic of Georgia in 1921; and

WHEREAS, A graduate of Millbrook School and Princeton University, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff served in the artillery in Korea after college, earning a Bronze Star for meritorious service; he then attended Columbia Law School; and

WHEREAS, A mainstay of civic, legal, cultural, and political life for more than five decades, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff began his public career as an aide to Congressman John V. Lindsay in the 1960's; he directed the storefront operation during Lindsay's campaign for mayor, and served as Assistant to the Mayor, Commissioner of Highways, and Transportation Administrator in the Lindsay administration; and

WHEREAS, From 1974-1989, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff served as a member of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) where

he was a tireless promoter of mass transit and sustainable transportation practices; and

WHEREAS, As the Regional Administrator for EPA's Region II from 1989 to 1993, he played an instrumental role in a decision that has had a lasting impact on the landscape around New York City's reservoir system in the Catskills; today the City's watershed protection program is considered an international model for addressing nonpoint source pollution; and

WHEREAS, While with the EPA, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff launched a reassessment of EPA's decision not to take action against General Electric Company for the removal of poly-chlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) dumped in the Hudson River, leading to one of the most significant toxic waste cleanup efforts ever undertaken; and

WHEREAS, A prominent attorney, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff founded the firm, Sidamon-Eristoff, Morrison, Warren & Ecker, and was of counsel to three other firms: Morrison & de Roos; Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler; and Lacher & Lovell-Taylor; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff was President of The News of the Highlands, Inc., and publisher of THE NEWS OF THE HIGHLANDS in Highland Falls and THE CORNWALL LOCAL in Cornwall, New York; and

WHEREAS, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff's commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff founded and chaired American Friends of Georgia, which provides humanitarian aid to the people of Georgia, and chaired the board of the Tolstoy Foundation, an international refugee resettlement and welfare agency; and

WHEREAS, This extraordinary man also chaired the board of Phipps Houses, a manager and builder of low and middle-income housing in New York City, and served on the board of Carnegie Hall for 25 years; in addition, he served for many years on the boards of Millbrook School, the

Constitution Island Association, the Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, and the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research; and

WHEREAS, More recently, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff served as chairman of the board of Audubon New York, a board member of the National Audubon Society, and a director of the New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund; and

WHEREAS, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff is survived by his wife of 54 years, Anne Phipps Sidamon-Eristoff, their three children, Simon, Elizabeth and Andrew, and eight grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff.