

2011-K924

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating the life and mourning the passing of Tuskegee Airman Clarence W. Dart

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Tuskegee Airman Clarence W. Dart, noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Clarence Dart died on Friday, February 17, 2012 at the age of 91; and

WHEREAS, Born on December 6, 1920 in Elmira, New York, Clarence Dart was the son of the late Clarence and Catherine (Austin) Dart; and

WHEREAS, A 1932 graduate of Elmira Free Academy, Clarence Dart was drafted in 1942, entering the United States Army Air Corps during World War II; he also attended the Elmira Aviation Ground School; and

WHEREAS, Clarence Dart served as a member of the 332nd Fighter Group and was assigned to the 99th Fighter Squadron in the 12th Air Force in North Africa; as a Tuskegee Airman flying P-40s with the 318th Army Air Force Unit Squadron F, he flew 95 missions and was shot down twice; and

WHEREAS, A recipient of two Purple Hearts for injuries sustained during air combat, Clarence Dart later retired as Lieutenant Colonel, having also flown aboard P-51s escorting 15th Air Force bombers; he then attended Aero Industries Tech Institute in California, General Electric Flight Test School and was affiliated with GE's Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory from 1950 through 1987; and

WHEREAS, Clarence Dart received many commendations, awards and medals, including five Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the New York State Conspicuous Service Cross and the New York State Service Star; he was later inducted into the Elmira Free Academy Wall of Fame and was a 2011 inductee into the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, In March of 2007, Clarence Dart and his fellow airmen were also recognized at the United States Capitol with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor that Congress may bestow; a noted guest speaker on black history at various local schools, colleges and universities, his community service includes the Charlton School for Girls Trustee Board, the Salvation Army Board, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation Community Relations Board, New York State Air Museum AIM High Program along with the finance committees of both the Troy Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church of which he was a devoted member; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by a son Clarence, Clarence Dart is survived by his wife, Millie; his eight children, Rose, Warren, Katherine, Gwendolyn, Denise, Dawn, Joyce, and Cynthia; as well as eight grandchildren, Tyrone, Jessica, Kristen, Keith, Jonathan, Devine, D. Gregor and Nathaniel Providence, along with one great-granddaughter, Layla; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Clarence Dart 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 celebrate the life and mourn the passing of Tuskegee Airman Clarence W. Dart; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Clarence W. Dart.