

## 2013-K669

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Lee Wallard posthumously for his extraordinary athletic achievements upon the occasion of his induction into the Schenectady City School District Athletic Hall of Fame

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to outstanding athletes who have distinguished themselves through their exceptional performance, attaining unprecedented success and the highest level of personal achievement; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Lee Wallard posthumously for his extraordinary athletic achievements upon the occasion of his induction into the Schenectady City School District Athletic Hall of Fame, to be celebrated at the 16th Annual Schenectady City School District Athletic Hall of Fame and Reunion Dinner on Monday, September 9, 2013, at Proctor's Theatre in Schenectady, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Schenectady City School District Athletic Hall of Fame was established in 1998 to honor those individuals who have made significant contributions to the history and tradition of sports in the Schenectady City School District; and

WHEREAS, Nearly a century ago, Lee Wallard was a student attending the Schenectady City School District; and

WHEREAS, During the 1930s, Lee Wallard began driving in auto races in Altamont and participated in his first race in 1941, in the AAA Championship at the "Syracuse 100," prior to serving his country during World War II in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, After World War II, Lee Wallard continued his passion for racing, competing in and winning the 1951 Indianapolis 500 driving the No. 99 Belanger Special to victory, leading in 159 of the 200 laps; and

WHEREAS, Lee Wallard, becoming very popular within the racing communi-

ty, is known for and credited with changing the driving strategy, technique and practice used during the Indianapolis 500 race; and

WHEREAS, Lee Wallard participated in three additional Indianapolis 500 competitions, finishing 7th in 1948, leading in the 1949 race until his car failed due to mechanical problems, and in 1950, finishing 6th; and

WHEREAS, In 1951, with his successes in racing, Lee Wallard was named Schenectady Athlete of the Year by the Mont Pleasant Athletic Club, where he was honored by Yogi Berra; and

WHEREAS, During a race in Reading, Pennsylvania, just days after winning the 1951 Indianapolis 500, Lee Wallard was burned and hospitalized for several months, from which he came back and raced for several more years until his retirement in 1954; and

WHEREAS, Following his retirement, Lee Wallard traveled the world as a representative of the Champion Spark Plug Company and advocated for safety initiatives including highway safety; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious occasion presents a unique opportunity for this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to Lee Wallard; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is moved to honor Lee Wallard posthumously for his extraordinary athletic accomplishments which are a tribute to his skill, dedication and commitment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations with praise and pride to honor Lee Wallard posthumously for his extraordinary athletic achievements upon the occasion of his induction into the Schenectady City School District Athletic Hall of Fame; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Lee Wallard, and the Schenectady City School District Athletic Hall of Fame.