

2013-K931

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Walter Richard Wheeler Jr., 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, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body mourns the death of Walter Richard Wheeler Jr., distinguished citizen, and devoted member of his community, noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. of Sherwood Park, New York, died on Monday, February 10, 2014, at the age of 74; and

WHEREAS, He was born in Albany, New York, on April 27, 1939, to the late Walter R. and Mary DiBella Wheeler; the oldest of four children, he was raised in Albany, and graduated from the Vincentian Institute in 1957; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; he was a well-known, highly respected, and much beloved figure in the labor advocacy and organizing world for more than 40 years; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr.'s professional career and home life were intertwined with labor advocacy beginning in 1972 when he worked for Huyck Felt Company, and simultaneously became active in the United Textile Workers of America, Local 76; and

WHEREAS, In 1983 Walter Richard Wheeler worked for Tek-Hughes and joined Local 20468, eventually serving as president, member of the executive board, and the Negotiating Committee for the Local; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. will be remembered as a modest and reticent man with a prodigious work ethic; he was an omnipresent and tireless fixture at conferences, demonstrations, strikes, contract negotiations and labor celebrations; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. lost his voice to cancer in 1999, and he used this experience to redouble his efforts in giving voice to the concerns of workers everywhere, using pen and paper as his tools; his stamina, integrity, dedication and determination were an inspiration to all who met him; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr.'s commitment to fighting for the needs of working people and passion for justice was further evidenced by his intrepid assumption of extensive leadership responsibilities in many local and statewide labor and advocacy groups; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. served as president of CDULSTC Local 76; member of the Executive Board of the Capital District Union Label and Service Trades Council; president of the Albany Labor Council Committee on Political Education; sergeant-at-arms of the Albany Central Federation of Labor; vice-president of the New York State Union Label and Service Trades Department; secretary-treasurer of the Capital District Union Label and Service Trades Council, AFL-CIO; first vice-president of the Albany, New York Central Federation of Labor; trustee of the Troy Area Labor Council; treasurer of the Capital District Labor Day Parade Committee; and president of the New York State Alliance for Retired Americans; and

WHEREAS, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr.'s commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, His efforts earned the recognition of his peers, and he received numerous awards and accolades; his charitable projects and community service endeavors of in-depth magnitude include work with the City of Hope, the United Fund, the American Red Cross, the American

Heart Association, and the Boys and Girls Club of Albany; and
WHEREAS, Predeceased by his sister, Frances Lea Wheeler Pennock,
Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. is survived by his wife of almost 52 years,
the former Magdalene T. Gleason; his two children, Renee A. Manny and
Walter R. Wheeler II; his grandchildren, Cassandra and Brendon Manny;
and his siblings, sister Virginia (Daniel) Murley, and brother, Joseph
(Marie Brill) Wheeler; as well as his sister-in-law, Mary Gleason Seger
and her husband Joseph, and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins; and
WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of
compassion, Walter Richard Wheeler Jr. 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 Walter Richard Wheeler Jr., distinguished citizen,
and devoted member of his community; and be it further
RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-
smitted to the family of Walter Richard Wheeler Jr.