

2013-J4246

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Theodore "Ted" Corbitt, posthumously, upon the occasion of the renaming of the intersection of 228th Street and Broadway as Ted Corbitt Way in the Bronx, New York, in recognition of his pioneering and remarkable life

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Theodore "Ted" Corbitt, posthumously, upon the occasion of the NYC City Council renaming of the intersection of 228th Street and Broadway as Ted Corbitt Way in the Bronx, New York, in recognition of his pioneering and remarkable life; and

WHEREAS, Ted Corbitt of Yonkers, New York, died on December 12, 2007, at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed man is considered by many to be the father of American long distance running; he was an elite marathon runner, pioneer in ultramarathon races, and a leader in many organizations dedicated to the sport of distance running; and

WHEREAS, Theodore "Ted" Corbitt was born on a cotton farm near Dunbarton, South Carolina on January 31, 1919; he had to overcome much adversity as an African American during this time period; and

WHEREAS, Ted Corbitt ran at home on his family's farm, as well as on the track team in high school; he continued his running career at the University of Cincinnati where he attained his bachelor's degree in education; and

WHEREAS, After serving his country as a member of the United States Army during World War II, Ted Corbitt earned a graduate degree in physical therapy from New York University; he was the chief physical therapist at the International Center for the Disabled in Manhattan, and taught physical therapy at Columbia University and N.Y.U.; he practiced physical therapy for 40 years and wrote widely on the subject; and

WHEREAS, Ted Corbitt ran his first marathon in Boston, in 1951, and participated in the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, Finland; in 1954, he won the Philadelphia Marathon and the Yonkers Marathon to become the United States National Marathon Champion; he would go on to set numerous records in distance events during his career; and

WHEREAS, In 1957, this remarkable figure helped found the Road Runners Club of America and served later as its president; he established guidelines to measure courses accurately for the thousands of nationally certified races; and

WHEREAS, Ted Corbitt was among the first five athletes inducted into the National Distance Running Hall of Fame in Utica, New York, in 1998; and

WHEREAS, In 1959, as president of the New York Road Runners Club, Ted Corbitt organized the first ultramarathon event in the United States; this 30-mile event, called the Cherry Tree, was a forerunner of the New York City Marathon; Ted Corbitt went on to win this notable race, and would go on to organize and win many more; and

WHEREAS, Ted Corbitt ran 199 marathons and ultramarathons, winning 30 of these races; he ended his running career at the age of 55, but continued to participate in ultramarathons; at the age of 81, he walked 240 miles in a six day race, and the following year, walked 303 miles at the same event; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his wife of 42 years, Ruth (Butler), Ted Corbitt is survived by his one son, Gary; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individ-

uals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Theodore "Ted" Corbitt, posthumously, upon the occasion of the NYC City Council renaming of the intersection of 228th Street and Broadway as Ted Corbitt Way in the Bronx, New York, in recognition of his pioneering and remarkable life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Ted Corbitt.