

## 2013-J5016

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending Firefighter Gary VerStraete upon the occasion of his being selected as Firefighter of the Year by the Marbletown Fire Department

WHEREAS, The firefighters of New York State are renowned throughout the Nation; their reputation is synonymous with excellence in the arduous field of fire protection and prevention; and

WHEREAS, Since the early days of "teapot steamers," the volunteer firefighter has been the cornerstone of our great Nation's efforts to spare us from the ravages of fire; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to commend Firefighter Gary VerStraete upon the occasion of his being selected as Firefighter of the Year by the Marbletown Fire Department to be celebrated at the Firemen's Banquet on Saturday, April 26, 2014, at the Finger Lakes Gaming and Racetrack, Farmington, New York; and

WHEREAS, Firefighter Gary VerStraete is being recognized as Firefighter of the Year for his outstanding CPR lifesaving efforts; and

WHEREAS, Born on May 4, 1967, in Newark, New York, Gary VerStraete earned his Associates degree in Criminal Justice; in addition, he is a Level 2 Fire Investigator, and is a Nationally Certified Interior Firefighter at the recruit level; and

WHEREAS, Currently serving as the Chief of the Marbletown Fire Department, Gary VerStraete is also a 25 year member of the Newark Police Department; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to his community, Gary VerStraete is a member of numerous organizations, including: the Housing Authority, Board of Directors for Housing Development Corp., and St. Michaels Church; he is also a past Cub Master for Pack 138; past Scout Master for Pack 122; past member of Newark Arcadia Volunteer Ambulance; and past member of

Newark Elks Lodge; and

WHEREAS, The recipient of several accolades, Gary VerStraete received the Exceptional Service Award for establishing the DARE Program and serving as a DARE Instructor for both the middle schools and the high school within the Newark Central School District; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his wife, Michelle, and two sons, Kyle (Annalise Yager) and Brian, as well as two grandchildren, Addison and Blake, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, Volunteer firefighters and fire departments not only provide the critical service of fire protection but also engage in other activities of great benefit and importance to the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, It takes a special dedication, a strong desire to help others and a tireless sense of community to forsake precious time with family and friends to respond to the signal that a neighbor is in need; Gary VerStraete is such a firefighter; throughout 29 years of devoted service, this volunteer heroically performed, above and beyond the call of duty, those responsibilities which define the task of fire protection; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Firefighter Gary VerStraete upon the occasion of his being selected as Firefighter of the Year by the Marletown Fire Department; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Firefighter Gary VerStraete.