

2015-K347

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Sam Riti upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2014 Silver Helmet AMVET of the Year Award

WHEREAS, The State of New York takes great pride in recognizing its esteemed residents who have distinguished themselves in service to their community; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably defending this country's freedom and constantly working for the preservation of peace, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concerns, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Sam Riti for his accomplishments, including the 2014 Silver Helmet AMVET of the Year Award in March of 2014; and

WHEREAS, The Silver Helmet Awards recognize excellence and outstanding accomplishment in the fields of Americanism, defense, rehabilitation, congressional and civil service; the AMVETS Silver Helmet Award, a silver replica of the World War II GI helmet, is known as the "Veterans Oscar"; and

WHEREAS, Sam Riti, of Yonkers, New York, has gone above and beyond the call of duty in his demonstrated commitment to his fellow veterans and the City of Yonkers; and

WHEREAS, The son of the late Palma and Rocco Riti, Sam Riti served with honor in the United States Army from September 1966-1968 during the Vietnam War; he received the Good Conduct Medal, the Expert Badge for Firing, Rifle and Pistols, and the National Defense Ribbon; and

WHEREAS, Sam Riti has been a member of the Armando Rauso AMVETS Post No. 40 in Yonkers since 1974, and has held many positions of leadership in that time, including 17 terms as Post Commander; he has been Post

Representative to the Central Committee of War Veterans Organizations, City of Yonkers, for 38 years, serving as that body's Vice Chairman and Chairman; in addition, he has served at the state level in multiple capacities, including more than 30 years as New York State Delegate representative for Post 40 at state conventions and SEC meetings; since 2005 he has served as New York State Public Relations Officer; and WHEREAS, Sam Riti's outstanding leadership has significantly raised the profile of veterans in his community; he was instrumental in getting the street on which his Post is located named "Armando Rauso Post 40 AMVETS Way," and he also played a role in the City of Yonkers' renaming a portion of South Broadway "Veterans Memorial Plaza," as well as the naming of the bridges going North and South on the Taconic State Parkway, "AMVETS Memorial Bridges"; in addition, he was part of the establishment of a VA Clinic in Yonkers; and

WHEREAS, Tireless in his devotion, Sam Riti's list of volunteer activities in service to veterans is endless; a member of the Westchester County Veterans Advisory Board for over 25 years, he has been the Yonkers Veterans Day Chairman 14 times, and is the only veteran appointed Mayors Memorial Day Chairman for five mayors, annually overseeing activities such as: Color Your Flag Contest, Oratorical Contest, Decoration of Graves, and the Memorial Day Parade and church services; in addition, he has spent untold hours coordinating the collection of food, toiletries, and other wish list items for preparation and shipping of care packages to active servicemen and women in the United States Armed Forces overseas; and

WHEREAS, Sam Riti was employed as a letter carrier for the United States Postal Service (USPS), retiring after 39 years; during his tenure he participated in many community activities on behalf of USPS, serving

as co-chairman of the Combined Federal Campaign, Bond Canvasser for the United States Savings Bond Drive, and, most notably, Chairman of the Yonkers Postal Service Blood Drive; his blood drives collected some 25

gallons of blood, and, a loyal blood donor himself, he is a member of the elite 2 Gallon Club; and

WHEREAS, Sam Riti has been called upon to contribute his time and talents to countless other civic and charitable endeavors and has always given of himself unstintingly; and

WHEREAS, A high school basketball official for 40 years, he officiates many volunteer basketball games benefiting PAL, Ronald McDonald House, churches, the Board of Education and the Yonkers Fire Department to raise money for their burn center; Sam Riti has also done games for the Post Office to raise funds for the C.F.C., the Jerry Lewis Telethon, and the NAACP; and

WHEREAS, This magnanimous man was President and Treasurer of the 7th Ward Punchball League for 15 years, and helped with the Little League teams in the North Yonkers Boys Club and Park Hill Boys and Girls Club; he also sat on the Board of Directors for the Yonkers YMCA for 10 years, and, an active helper at the VA Hospital, he received a certificate in 2009 recognizing 1,500 volunteer hours; and

WHEREAS, For more than 20 years, Sam Riti has annually purchased and given more than four dozen Thanksgiving turkeys to churches for distribution to families in need and homeless shelters; and

WHEREAS, Sam Riti has received numerous awards and accolades for his tremendous contributions to the community and to veterans, including his designation as AMVET of the Year by the Department of New York State, the Congressman's Medal of Merit, the Americanism Award from the City of Yonkers, and many proclamations and certificates from elected officials; in 1979, he was one of eight men cited to receive a Citation from the County of Westchester on behalf of President Jimmy Carter, as Viet Nam Veteran of the Era; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his children, Palma and Rocco, who feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, Sam Riti has exhibited the true spirit of this prestigious

award through his unmatched commitment to veterans and his community;

now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to

honor Sam Riti for his accomplishments; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-

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mitted to Sam Riti.