



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Senator Kennedy Statement on the Passing of Buffalo Bills' Owner and Founder Ralph Wilson Jr.

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY March 25, 2014

Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, released the following statement following the passing of Buffalo Bills' Owner and Founder Ralph Wilson Jr.

"Considered by many Bills fans as the father of football in Buffalo and across Western New York, Ralph Wilson's passing marks the end of an era. Mr. Wilson will be remembered as an immense figure in our city's history whose contributions extended far beyond the football field and deep into the roots of our community. Western New York would not be the same without Ralph Wilson Jr. and the Buffalo Bills.

"Western New York has had its fair share of hard times, but with Ralph Wilson's firm commitment to our region, the Buffalo Bills have always been there for us, bringing our community together, lifting us up, providing hope and pride. He taught us all to 'Billieve.' His belief in Buffalo and dedication to the Bills helped support our region's morale and our economy, boosting pride and countless local businesses.

"For all the good times we've shared rooting for our beloved Buffalo Bills, we have Ralph Wilson Jr. to thank. Like all sports franchises, there have been disappointments along the way, but nothing compares to the deep sadness we feel this day, as we mourn the loss of Ralph Wilson Jr.

“The Buffalo News today shared a memorable quote that Ralph Wilson delivered after signing a 15-year lease deal in 1997. It is both moving and accurate, heartfelt and sincere. It shows that Ralph Wilson loved and appreciated this community, as much as we appreciated him. He said, ‘The strength of the Bills franchise is the passion of the fans. Buffalo is a community of down-to-earth, hard-working families who, in large numbers, are also avid sports fans. You know how the people here feel about you because they are very straightforward. That is a quality I admire.’ We have always admired Ralph Wilson Jr., and we mourn his passing today.”

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*Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate’s 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and nearly all of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.*