



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

## Senate Passes Resolution Honoring the Life of Bills Owner Ralph Wilson Jr.

DEAN G. SKELOS March 27, 2014

The New York State Senate passed a resolution today honoring the life of Buffalo Bills owner Ralph Wilson Jr., who passed away this week.

As an original owner in the American Football League (AFL), Wilson founded the Buffalo Bills franchise in 1959. Over the next 50-plus years, Wilson was one of the most influential men in professional football and played a vital role in some of the most important events in pro-football history, including the NFL-AFL merger. Wilson was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2009.

Wilson also made significant contributions to the community by establishing the Ralph Wilson Medical Research Foundation, procuring grants for area athletic fields, working with food banks in Buffalo and Rochester, and supporting many other local charitable organizations.

Senate Co-Leader Dean Skelos said: “Ralph Wilson meant so much to the people of Western New York and devoted much of his life to ensuring that the Bills stayed there as a beloved institution for everyone. His commitment and dedication to Buffalo, not only with the Bills, but through his philanthropic investments in the community, had a tremendous positive impact across the entire state. He will be greatly missed.”

Senate Co-Leader Jeff Klein said: "Ralph Wilson will always be remembered as a legendary figure in Buffalo and across New York State. Today, we proudly recognize the life of a New York icon who committed his life to serving his team, his community, and his state. He will be missed."

Senator Mark Grisanti, who sponsored the resolution, said: "Ralph Wilson's passing was a sad, sad day for fans of the Buffalo Bills in particular, and for professional football in general. We have lost a great man. He will always be a legend in football and in Western New York. Thank you Ralph for your commitment to Western New York."

Senator Patrick Gallivan said: "Today we honor the legacy and life of Ralph Wilson. We've heard of all his accomplishments and his commitment to football and about his many acts of generosity. He was very generous to organization after organization. The people in the community didn't always know about his contributions because he didn't seek recognition for his good works. Ralph Wilson lived the life of a good citizen that we all strive to be. Western New York has suffered a great loss."

Senator Michael Ranzenhofer said: "Ralph Wilson was a class act and we are deeply indebted to him because he kept the Bills in Buffalo. He was a wonderful human being and the stadium bears his name as a great tribute to his foresight and perseverance in keeping the Bills in Buffalo. He is appreciated by all of Western New York for that and for all his good deeds.

Senator George Maziarz said: "Ralph Wilson will forever be a legend in Western New York. He brought the Buffalo Bills here, he kept the Bills here, and he made the team part of the fabric of our community. He was truly was an iconic individual because he stuck by Western New York and Buffalo more than many people. Mr. Wilson said as long as he was alive he would keep the Bills franchise in Buffalo. He believed in our community and his

commitment to the region and Bills fans should be celebrated by all.”

Senator Cathy Young said: “All of Western New York is in mourning over the loss of a such a great man. Loyalty, integrity and trust were the hallmarks of Ralph Wilson. He made sure that our beloved Buffalo Bills, a team that is part of the fabric of our lives, stayed in Buffalo. We are grateful to have had him for his 95 years of life.”