

2015-K1015

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending George John Mitchell upon the occasion of his designation as Grand Marshal of the New York City 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to individuals of true purpose and worthy accomplishment who work diligently to preserve and celebrate their rich cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend George John Mitchell upon the occasion of his designation as Grand Marshal of the New York City 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade; and

WHEREAS, In acknowledgment of this most prestigious appointment George John Mitchell will have the honor of leading the 254th consecutive New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade up Fifth Avenue on Thursday, March 17, 2016; and

WHEREAS, New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade marched for the first time in 1762, 14 years before the Declaration of Independence was signed in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the Parade is regarded as the most popular of all the Parades in New York City, and honors Saint Patrick - the patron Saint of the Archdiocese of New York and Ireland; and

WHEREAS, The New York Parade consists only of marchers and each year hosts some 250,000 marchers and two million spectators; the Parade has many outstanding marching bands, bagpipers in marching formations, high school and college bands from throughout the United States and from all over the world; and

WHEREAS, George John Mitchell was born to Lebanese and Irish immigrants in Waterville, Maine; even though his parents struggled to make ends meet, they always encouraged their children to study hard and

appreciate the value of a good education; and

WHEREAS, After graduation from high school, George J. Mitchell earned his bachelor's degree from Bowdoin College in 1954; he then proudly served as an officer of the United States Army Counter-Intelligence Corps in Berlin, Germany for two years; and

WHEREAS, After his discharge, George J. Mitchell received his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center in 1960; from 1960-1962, he served as a trial lawyer in the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, From 1962-1965, George J. Mitchell held the position of Executive Assistant to Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine; he then decided to return to his home state to practice law until 1977; and

WHEREAS, During this time, George J. Mitchell served as Deputy Campaign Manager for Senator Muskie's vice presidential campaign in 1968, and again, for his presidential campaign in 1972; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, George J. Mitchell was selected as United States Attorney for Maine, a position he held until 1979, when he became United States District Judge for Maine; and

WHEREAS, One year later, George J. Mitchell was appointed to the United States Senate to fulfill the unexpired term of Senator Edmund S. Muskie, who had resigned to become Secretary of State; in 1982, he was elected to a full term in the Senate; and

WHEREAS, In 1988, Senator George J. Mitchell was reelected to the Senate with 81 percent of the vote, the largest margin in the history of the state of Maine; at the opening of the next session, he was elected Senate Majority Leader, the second most powerful elected official in the United States, a title he held for six years; and

WHEREAS, After finishing his last Senate term in 1995, George J. Mitchell was called by both the British and Irish Governments to serve as Chairman of the International Commission on Disarmament in Northern Ireland, and as Chairman of the subsequent peace negotiations, culminat-

ing in the historic Good Friday agreement; and

WHEREAS, After this success in Ireland, President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak of Israel and Chairman Arafat of the Palestinian Authority asked George J. Mitchell to chair an International Fact Finding Committee on the crisis between the Israel and the Palestinian Authority; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his esteemed political career, George J. Mitchell is the author of four books including WORLD ON FIRE, NOT FOR AMERICA ALONE: THE TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRACY AND THE FALL OF COMMUNISM, and MAKING PEACE, as well as MEN OF ZEAL which he co-authored with Senator Bill Cohen of Maine; and

WHEREAS, Currently, George J. Mitchell holds the titles of Chancellor of The Queen's University of Belfast and as President of The Economic Club of Washington; he has also served as Chairman of the International Crisis Group, Chairman of the Special Commission, and as Chairman of the National Health Care Commission; and

WHEREAS, A St. Patrick's Day Parade reflects and records the ongoing history of the United States and Ireland, and provides an opportunity for people of all generations to assemble in ethnic pride and pageantry; and

WHEREAS, A fitting choice for Grand Marshal for the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade, George J. Mitchell embodies the spirit and the cherished ideals and values of Irish-Americans of this great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend George John Mitchell upon the occasion of his designation as Grand Marshal of the New York City 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to George John Mitchell.