

## 2017-K623

Assembly Resolution No. 623

BY: M. of A. Murray

COMMEMORATING the 95th Anniversary of the Medford Fire Department, Inc. to be celebrated at its parade on August 12, 2017

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to commemorate the 95th Anniversary of the Medford Fire Department, Inc. to be celebrated at its parade on Saturday, August 12, 2017, and to honor its past and present firefighting members for 95 years of fire protection to the citizens of Medford, New York, and its surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, Fire departments are an integral part of community protection services in every locality of our State; during the past 95 years, the courageous and devoted firefighters of the Medford Fire Department have valiantly responded to all types of fire emergencies and have won the praise and respect of the community which they serve; and

WHEREAS, Wood fires have always been a hazard on Long Island; the brush and pitch pine surroundings are ignited by lightning strikes, carelessness, intentional burn-off of property lots for clearing, and more often than not, as a result of the Long Island Railroad and their steam locomotives which traverse through Medford; and

WHEREAS, In the past, fires were extinguished either by burning out, groups of neighbors working together, or by the State Conservation

Department which monitored the area from watch towers along the central moraine hills to the north in Farmingville and Selden, New York; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1920s, a group of men formed a volunteer fire department at Westphal's Garage; by 1923, the South Medford Independent Hose Company had joined the Suffolk County Volunteer Fireman's Association for an initiation fee and first year's dues of \$3.50; and

WHEREAS, In November of that same year, the Suffolk County Volunteer Fireman's Association purchased a piece of fire apparatus from the Bayshore Fire Department, and Joseph Anderson offered to donate a plot of ground on the State Highway at Jamaica Avenue; in the meantime, the fire apparatus was stored in a shed at the Medford Hotel; and

WHEREAS, William Hahn, Sr. was elected Chief, serving from 1923-1925; Leroy Smith offered a piece of land on Peconic Avenue and Oregon Avenue for the purpose of building a fire house; in 1924, this property deed was recorded; and

WHEREAS, During this time, fire apparatus demonstrations were presented to the public in order to procure donations; some members donated their \$.25 an hour salary putting out fires with the State Conservation Department back to the fire company; and

WHEREAS, By 1925, members of the South Medford Independent Hose Company had to be at least 18 years of age, and every member had to attend every quarterly meeting, unless he had a reasonable excuse; he was fined \$.25 if he was absent; and

WHEREAS, Meanwhile, a second group of men had gotten together to form a volunteer fire department, and in April of 1926, these individuals reorganized their group and called the Medford Fire

Department Company No. 1, and George S. Mistler was chosen as its Chief;  
and

WHEREAS, As of March 10, 1929, the original group referred to itself  
as the Independent Fire Company of South Medford, and its Chief was  
Alfred Kerny; he imposed a limit of 15 members, charged dues of \$.25 a  
month, and meetings were held on the last Friday of the month; and

WHEREAS, Chief Alfred Kerny provided his fire extinguishers and  
wrecker, and a whistle was purchased to notify members of alarms; Chief  
Kerny also donated all his available space at his repair/gas station to  
store apparatus and hold meetings free of charge; and

WHEREAS, Members purchased their numbered badges at a cost of \$1.50  
each, and a fire apparatus was purchased from Bellmore Fire Department  
in March of 1929; and

WHEREAS, In 1937, Medford Fire Company No. 1 proposed building a  
fire house on the donated property on Oregon Avenue and Peconic Avenue;  
then Chief, George S. Mistler opened the fire house on June 7, 1940; and

WHEREAS, In April of 1948, Richard Holmes was elected Chief of the  
Medford Fire Company No. 1 and Eugene Kiernan was elected Chief of the  
Independent Hose Company of South Medford; one year later, the two fire  
companies joined together and formed the Medford Volunteer Fire  
Department under the leadership of Chief William Hahn, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, With a membership of dedicated firefighters, the record of  
the Medford Fire Department in public service and fire protection is one  
to be envied; for 24 hours a day, for 365 days a year, for 95 years,  
whenever the alarm sounded, these noble volunteers left their homes and  
went to the aid of their neighbors; and

WHEREAS, The brave firefighters of the Medford Fire Department are prepared to risk their lives every day to help save the lives of others and to protect homes and property from the destruction caused by fire; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the skill and devoted service demonstrated by individual firefighters, the Medford Fire Department reflects the history and development of firefighting over the past 95 years; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body cannot express sufficient gratitude to those devoted individuals who recognize that the preservation of life and property is a sacred responsibility and who make that responsibility their own by serving as firefighters; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that we should give special recognition to those who work so assiduously for the betterment of their communities, and acknowledge publicly the heroic good works performed by the volunteer fire departments of this great Empire State, their officers and auxiliaries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to proudly commemorate the 95th Anniversary of the Medford Fire Department,

Inc. to be celebrated at its parade on August 12, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Medford Fire Department.