

2017-J2872

Senate Resolution No. 2872

BY: Senator CARLUCCI

HONORING Jerry Donnellan upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this country's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace in peace-time, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Jerry Donnellan upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Senate Liberty Medal was established by resolution and is awarded to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, Born in 1946, Jerry Donnellan has been a lifelong Rockland County resident; he grew up along the Hudson River in the Town of Nyack before the first Tappan Zee Bridge was built; after graduating from Albertus Magnus High School in Bardonia, New York, he attended Rockland Community College before transferring to Texas A&M University; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, Jerry Donnellan was drafted into the United States Army, where he proudly served his country during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, On October 24, 1969, Sergeant Jerry Donnellan was wounded while on patrol with the 196th Light Infantry in Vietnam's central highlands; he was shot twice and hit with a grenade, leaving countless pieces of shrapnel in his body; and

WHEREAS, After his honorable discharge, Jerry Donnellan spent more than a year recovering and undergoing rehabilitation after his many grievous injuries; during this time, he worked as a stage manager with Frank Sinatra and got to travel all over the world; for his courageous service, he was awarded three Purple Heart Medals; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Donnellan joined the staff of Rockland County's Veteran Service Agency; as its Director, he has seen the county's veteran population change predominantly from those who served in World War II, to Korea and Vietnam, and now the Iraq and Afghanistan wars; and

WHEREAS, At the beginning of Jerry Donnellan's tenure, the Veteran Service Agency consisted of 30,000 World War II veterans; today, there are almost 10,000 members; and

WHEREAS, In his role as Director, Jerry Donnellan was instrumental in establishing several programs for local veterans such as the Memorial Day Watchfires and a veterans health clinic; he also helped to raise

awareness about post-traumatic stress disorder, and opened the first homeless shelter for veterans in Valley Cottage (Missing In America), which has since closed and has been transferred to Homes for Heroes in Tappan; and

WHEREAS, After more than three decades of distinguished service to the veterans of Rockland County, Jerry Donnellan will officially retire in December of 2017; and

WHEREAS, Residents of this great State must never forget the courage with which these men and women served their country, and must recognize that no greater debt is owed than that owed to those who gave their lives for their beloved Nation and to those who continue to be missing in action; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, Jerry Donnellan demonstrated his love for his country and merits forevermore, the highest respect of his State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Jerry Donnellan upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Jerry Donnellan.