

2017-K761

Assembly Resolution No. 761

BY: M. of A. Mayer

CELEBRATING the life and accomplishments of Dr.
James Melius, 9/11 hero and public health expert

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledges their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, It is said that "He who saves one human being is as if he saves an entire world"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James "Jim" Melius of Buffalo, New York, died at his home in Copake Falls, New York, on January 1, 2018, at the age of 69; and

WHEREAS, An acclaimed occupational health physician, Dr. Jim Melius served the labor community in numerous capacities including Administrator of the New York State Laborers' Health and Safety Trust Fund, Administrator and Treasurer of the New York State Laborers' Political Action Committee, Research Director of the Laborers' Health and Safety Fund of North America, Chair of the Federal Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health, Chair of the Steering Committee for what would become the WTC Health Program, Chairman of a medical advisory

committee for the International Association of Fire Fighters, and member of the 9/11 Health Watch Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, At the beginning of his long and illustrious career, Dr. Jim Melius worked for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and the New York State Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, An intense, yet kind and benevolent man, Dr. Jim Melius served on behalf of American workers for over three decades; he testified before various legislative bodies on issues such as 9/11 toxins exposure, asbestos exposure, radiation exposure, silica exposure, and general construction safety issues; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jim Melius is perhaps best known for his role as an advocate for the 3,000 members of the New York State Laborers' local unions who served as 9/11 responders on, and in the months following, September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, In the aftermath of 9/11, Dr. Jim Melius dispatched inspectors in an attempt to protect the health and safety of members; on September 12, 2007, in testimony before the House Committee on Education and Labor, he respectfully chastised the federal government's mismanaged oversight of 9/11 worker safety; and

WHEREAS, In order to ensure the future safety of our great nation's first responders, Dr. Jim Melius called for advanced training and preparation for catastrophic events and federal funding for 9/11 health monitoring; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his monumental work for 9/11 first responders, Dr. Jim Melius served as a passionate advocate for passage of the James Zadroga Health and Compensation Act of 2010; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jim Melius is survived by his loving wife, the former Melanie Boice, and his two devoted sons, Jeremy Melius and Ehren Melius, as well as a legion of friends, and colleagues who will long treasure his memory; and

WHEREAS, The compassion Dr. James Melius demonstrated, the intensity of his efforts to help others, and the depth of loss we feel at his leaving are evidence that he truly made a difference in this work that will long be remembered; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate the life and accomplishments of Dr. James Melius, 9/11 hero and public health expert; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Dr. James Melius.