

2017-J4554

Senate Resolution No. 4554

BY: Senator TEDISCO

HONORING Mary Lyall upon the occasion of her 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, 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 acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Mary Lyall upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate, to be celebrated at the 17th Annual New York State Missing Persons Day Event on Saturday, April 7, 2018, at the New York State Museum, Albany, New York; 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, Mary Lyall is the mother of Suzanne, a 19-year old sophomore at the University of Albany, who vanished under suspicious circumstances on Monday, March 2, 1998, after exiting a CDTA bus at Collins Circle on campus; and

WHEREAS, Since that fateful day, Mary Lyall has done all she can to search for her daughter, who as of this date, is still a missing person; and

WHEREAS, In 2001, Mary Lyall and her husband, the late Doug, established the Center for Hope with the idea of providing assistance to others affected by a similar loss; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Hope, Inc., is a not-for-profit organization with the mission of providing resources to educate, assist and support families and friends coping with the pain and uncertainty surrounding the disappearance of a loved one; and

WHEREAS, Mary Lyall pursued creation of New York State Missing Persons Day (April 6, 2001) and today, facilitates the Annual Missing Persons Day Ceremony; she was also instrumental in the passage of The New York State Campus Security Act, a state law requiring all colleges and universities to develop plans for prompt investigation of missing students and violent offenses committed on campus; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, she consulted with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to create "The Investigative Guide for Missing College Students" and "Just the Facts, Just in Case," a young adult ID Kit; and

WHEREAS, Mary Lyall pursued passage of "Suzanne's Law," a federal law that provides increased protection for missing young adults, which was signed by then President George Bush on April 30, 2003; and

WHEREAS, This extraordinary woman also advocated for passage of "The Suzanne Lyall Campus Security Act," a federal law enacted in 2007, which requires colleges across the nation to develop written plans in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, With a steadfast and unwavering commitment to helping others cope with the loss of a loved one, Mary Lyall collaborated with law enforcement and service providers to produce "What to do If a Loved One Goes Missing," a guide for left behind family members; and

WHEREAS, In addition, she developed a cold case playing card program that was distributed to prisoners in 57 county jails located across New York State, with hope that inmates would provide information and tips leading to crimes being solved; and

WHEREAS, Within every community of the State of New York there are certain individuals who, by virtue of their commitment and dedication, command the respect and admiration of their community for their exemplary contributions and service on behalf of others; Mary Lyall is one such individual; 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 this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Mary Lyall upon the occasion of her 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 Mary Lyall.