

2017-J5097

Senate Resolution No. 5097

BY: Senator RITCHIE

HONORING Sean O'Gorman 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, 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 all of us; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Sean O'Gorman 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, On April 26, 2018, Sean O'Gorman, who serves as a firefighter with the Oswego Fire Department, was vacationing with his family on North Carolina's Emerald Isle and spending the day at the beach; and

WHEREAS, While there, Sean O'Gorman spotted a pair of girls, who are sisters, on boogie boards, struggling to swim ashore and calling for help; and

WHEREAS, Upon hearing their cries for assistance, their older sister rushed into the water to come to their aid, eventually becoming stuck herself in the rip current; and

WHEREAS, Meanwhile, the mother of the girls called 911 and their father prepared to enter the water and rescue them; however, once the father started out toward them, Sean O'Gorman stopped him, and began to swim out to the three girls; and

WHEREAS, The oldest of the three girls, who swam out to help, was able to reach the shore on her own, while the other two held on to Sean O'Gorman's feet and were pulled back to safety; and

WHEREAS, Shortly after the group was back on shore, local emergency responders arrived, demonstrating how critical Sean O'Gorman's quick action and thinking were to saving the lives of the young women; and

WHEREAS, A member of the Oswego Fire Department since 2000, Sean O'Gorman recently completed a four-day swift water rescue course, which, along with his previous training and experience, enabled him to successfully complete the water rescue; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is known as one of the most dangerous states for rip currents, which are forceful, narrow channels of water that can move rapidly at speeds of up to 8 feet per-second; and

WHEREAS, Just days before Sean O'Gorman rescued the young women, a 4-year old boy who was vacationing with his family in North Carolina tragically lost his life after being pulled into the ocean by a swift wave; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, between 1996 and 2016, 54 beachgoers were killed in rip currents in North Carolina, which is the second-most in the nation following Florida; and

WHEREAS, Individuals such as Sean O'Gorman, are devoted to protecting others, going above and beyond and putting their own well-being on the line to protect those who they serve; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Sean O'Gorman 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 Sean O'Gorman.