

## 2019-J84

Senate Resolution No. 84

BY: Senator RANZENHOFER

MOURNING the death of former New York State Senator Walter J. Floss, dedicated political leader and strong advocate for the people of this great Empire State

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow that this Legislative Body, representing the people of the State of New York, is moved this day to pay tribute to an eminent gentleman of indomitable faith and dedication whose public service and countless accomplishments will forever stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, Walter J. Floss of Clarence, New York, died on Saturday, December 8, 2018, at the age of 95; and

WHEREAS, Walter J. Floss was born in Buffalo, New York, on February 13, 1923; he was the first child and only son to Walter J. Floss Sr. and Laura Lillis Floss, and the brother of Mary, Joan, Jean, Nancy and Dolores; and

WHEREAS, A graduate of Public School 74, Walter J. Floss enlisted in the United States Naval Reserve in 1940, following in the footsteps of his father, who fought in World War I, and his grandfather, who fought for the Union during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Trained as a flight engineer, Walter J. Floss valiantly served overseas for 46 months before being honorably discharged in October of 1945; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his military service, Walter J. Floss and Grayce H. Thornberry were united in marriage on July 13, 1946, at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, Walter J. Floss studied business administration at Millard Fillmore College of the University at Buffalo and opened Floss Insurance Agency on Transit Road in Clarence in 1945; he was elected to the Clarence Town Council in 1962, after serving on the Town's Planning Board and as a Constable; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, Walter J. Floss was elected to the 16th District of the Erie County Legislature; two years later he was named Chairman of the newly created Erie County Industrial Development Agency, serving in that post for 18 months; and

WHEREAS, Walter J. Floss was named a VIP by the Amherst Chamber of Commerce in 1974, for his work as Director and Building Chairman for Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, Walter J. Floss was elected a New York State Senator representing the 59th District, and later the 60th District; during this time, he helped create the Senate subcommittee on small business concerns, which became part of the Commerce Committee in 1985; and

WHEREAS, Senator Walter J. Floss was the first Chairman of the Senate's Standing Committee on Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his illustrious tenure, Senator Walter J. Floss held the esteemed position of Chairman of the Majority Task Force on defense spending in the State and served on many task forces, legislative commissions and Senate standing committees, mostly focusing on financial and business topics; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, Senator Walter J. Floss sponsored many bills designed to support small business owners; he also created an agency to help businesses follow state and federal regulations; and

WHEREAS, In 1981, United States Senator Lowell Weicker named Senator Walter J. Floss to the 25-member U.S. Senate Small Business Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, Senator Walter J. Floss retired in 1988, during which time he immersed himself in activities with his wife of 57 years, as well as their 10 children and their families; and

WHEREAS, Active in his community, Senator Walter J. Floss was an exempt member and past treasurer of the East Amherst Fire Department; a charter member, past grand knight and past district deputy of the Holy Name Council 3974 of the Knights of Columbus; a former member of the Ignatius Retreat League; and a member and past commander of the Swiftwater Power Squadron; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Senator Walter J. Floss belonged to the Aero Club, Buffalo Yacht Club, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Chapter 120 of the Disabled American Veterans, as well as the Clarence Rotary Club and the United States, Buffalo, Amherst and Clarence Chambers of Commerce; he was the longest-tenured member of the Alfred J. Jurek American Legion Post; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his wife, Grayce, Senator Walter J. Floss is survived by five sons, John, Robert, Walter III, James and Joseph; five daughters, Therese, Margaret, Kathleen, Judy and Mary; 30 grandchildren; and 38 great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Every citizen in New York State has most certainly benefited, in one way or another, from the deep dedication, intelligence and commitment that Senator Walter J. Floss brought to his work as a legislator and public policy-maker; loyal friend and trusted advisor, he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of former New York State Senator Walter J. Floss, dedicated political leader and strong advocate for the people of this great Empire State; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Walter J. Floss.