

2019-J212

Senate Resolution No. 212

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMENDING Chief Russell E. Brooks II upon the occasion of his retirement after 43 years of service to the Utica Fire Department

WHEREAS, Citizens across our State and Nation are inspired by and indebted to our noble firefighters who exhibit courage and bravery every day in the course of their duties; and

WHEREAS, Firefighters exemplify the power of human compassion and the strength of the American spirit through actions of the most heroic magnitude; their sacrifices and their selfless dedication merit tribute and recognition by all citizens of this great country; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Chief Russell E. Brooks II upon the occasion of his retirement after 43 years of dedicated service to the Utica Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, A lifelong resident of Utica, New York, Chief Russell E. Brooks II, grew up in West Utica with his large family; currently, he resides in the northern section of the city; and

WHEREAS, Chief Russell E. Brooks II proudly served his country as a member of the United States Marine Corps; upon the completion of his military service he returned to his hometown, and began his long and

distinguished career with the Utica Fire Department, where he held every rank within the department, including Chief, the position from which he officially retired on September 28, 2018; and

WHEREAS, In this capacity Chief Russell E. Brooks II accomplished numerous goals such as starting an ambulance service, opening the Utica Fire Academy, and implementing the ROP program; and

WHEREAS, During the aftermath of the terrorist act of 9/11, Chief Russell E. Brooks II and 11 of his fellow firefighters responded to Ground Zero to assist the FDNY with search and rescue operations; this brave act was featured in the book Twelve Valiant Men: Utica Firefighters at Ground Zero; and

WHEREAS, Devoted to both his Irish heritage and community, Chief Russell E. Brooks II serves as President of the Irish Cultural Center Building Committee, The Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the Utica Food Pantry; he is also a member of the Executive Board of the Great American Irish Festival; and

WHEREAS, For his steadfast and unremitting commitment to his community, Chief Russell E. Brooks II was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the Living Legend Award by the Boys & Girls Club of the Mohawk Valley; he was also recognized by the Cornhill Senior Center, the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, and was named Man of the Year by St. Peters School, and Firefighter of the Year by American Legion Post 229; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Russell E. Brooks II was featured in Firehouse Magazine for his heroism, and was chosen to carry the Olympic torch as one of Utica's Home Town Heroes, the city of Utica honored him by designating February 28th of each year as Russ Brooks Day; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his loving wife Marianne, and their four sons, Patrick, Michael, John and Matthew, all of whom have shown him love and support and rejoice in his many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Firefighters unwaveringly serve our great State with pride, valor, and integrity; they are often the first to respond to an emergency, whether the emergency is a fire, transportation accident, natural disaster, act of terrorism, medical crisis, or spill of hazardous materials; and

WHEREAS, It takes a special dedication, a strong desire to help others and a tireless sense of community to forsake precious time with family and friends to respond to the signal that a neighbor is in need; Chief Russell E. Brooks II is such a firefighter; throughout 43 years of devoted service, this firefighter has heroically performed, above and beyond the call of duty, those responsibilities which define the task of fire protection; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Chief Russell E. Brooks II upon the occasion of his retirement after 43 years of distinguished service to the Utica Fire Department; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Chief Russell E. Brooks II.