

2023-J532

Senate Resolution No. 532

BY: Senator RYAN

COMMENDING Jay Withey, Jr. 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 the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend the caring concern and heroic acts of individuals who take prompt and appropriate action in emergency situations, nobly risking their own lives in an effort to preserve the life of another; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Jay Withey, Jr. 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 Friday, December 23, 2022, Jay Withey, Jr. found himself among the scores of people trapped in their cars during the catastrophic blizzard which buried Buffalo, New York in nearly 52 inches of snow, leaving countless people stuck on snow-filled roadways as emergency

personnel were unable to push through extremely dangerous whiteout conditions; and

WHEREAS, During this time, Jay Withey, Jr. began walking and knocking on doors to find shelter but was understandably denied by people who were fearful to let a stranger into their homes; returning to his vehicle, he took a stranded woman and child in overnight, running the vehicle on and off throughout the night for heat before running out of gas; and

WHEREAS, With his vision and muscles becoming affected by the extremely cold temperatures, Jay Withey, Jr., fearful for his life, once again trudged through the snow desperate to find shelter; after breaking into a nearby school for food and warmth, this selfless man went back into the storm, searching for others; and

WHEREAS, A truly brave and courageous man, Jay Withey, Jr. gathered two dozen people who were stranded in their cars and brought them back to the school building where the group remained for 24-hours before using snow blowers they found in the janitors closet to eventually free their vehicles from the mounds of snow; and

WHEREAS, Jay Withey, Jr., a 27-year-old mechanic from Kenmore, New York, played a vital role in this extraordinary rescue effort, and should be praised by the people of this great Empire State for his astute actions in preserving the lives of others; and

WHEREAS, Justly recognized as a hero, Jay Withey, Jr. richly merits the admiration of this Legislative Body and his community for his consummate, swift actions in saving the lives of 24 people; moreover, he should be meritoriously commended for remaining calm under pressure and for showing valor and true courage while performing this lifesaving

deed; and

WHEREAS, Jay Withey, Jr. has so aptly demonstrated his character and compassion for the welfare of others, personifying, by virtue of his action, the collective concern of ordinary citizens across the community of New York State who voluntarily respond without thought of danger or reward when others are in need of help; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Jay Withey, Jr. 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 Jay Withey, Jr.