

2021-K1014

Assembly Resolution No. 1014

BY: M. of A. Giglio JM

MOURNING the death of James J. Snyder, longtime chairman of the Cattaraugus County Legislature, beloved family man and distinguished businessman

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding local government officials who, through their commitment and dedication, have served to improve the quality of life of their constituents, and have had a positive impact on communities large and small throughout the county in which they were elected, and the region at large; James J. Snyder was one such individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of James J. Snyder, noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, James J. Snyder passed away on Wednesday, May 11, 2022, at the age of 86, at his home in Olean, New York; and

WHEREAS, Born on January 8, 1936, James J. Snyder was the son of Florence Elizabeth Mead and Joseph Henry Snyder; he was raised in Olean and graduated from Olean High School; he earned his bachelor's degree from Syracuse University, where he played basketball during all four years of his attendance and his master's degree from St. Bonaventure University; and

WHEREAS, James J. Snyder was a born leader and true public servant; he served in the United States Army, both active and reserve, and was a member of the American Legion Post No. 530; his career in public service extended from Olean to Little Valley to Albany in New York and to Washington, DC; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return to Olean, James J. Snyder launched his political career as a member of the Olean Common Council; he was then elected to the Cattaraugus County Legislature, where he served for 44 years, 13 of which he was the Chair; he led the legislature in a collaborative manner, working to bring everyone together for the best outcomes of constituents; and

WHEREAS, James J. Snyder was an accomplished businessman, working as regional vice president of AAA of Western and Central New York, where he found a niche in the travel agency division and was able to visit countries around the globe; and

WHEREAS, As a legislator, James J. Snyder became a representative of his colleagues at the New York State Association of Counties and the National Association of Counties, rising to the office of president at each organization; he was named "County Leader of the Year" by City and County magazine in 1990; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush appointed James J. Snyder a special assistant for local affairs from 1991 to 1993, a result of his dedication to representing the interests of county governments at the state and national levels; and

WHEREAS, James J. Snyder worked diligently to assist in the establishment of a regional campus of Jamestown Community College in

Olean; he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the college in 2021; and

WHEREAS, The accomplishments of James J. Snyder during his years of public service are numerous and notable; he was the last surviving member of the Cattaraugus County Legislature's first meeting in 1970 at his 2020 retirement; in 2019, the legislative chambers were renamed the James J. Snyder Legislative Chambers; he was adopted into the Hawk Clan of the Seneca Nation of Indians; and

WHEREAS, James J. Snyder is survived by his wife, Paula; three daughters, Sydney Evans, Amy Ehmann, and Shayne Certo; a son, Joseph; two stepchildren, Timothy Perrigo and Maggie Kasperski; a sister, Elizabeth Knight; 13 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren; as well as numerous friends and colleagues who will long cherish his memory; and

WHEREAS, A devoted husband and father, James J. Snyder's name is synonymous with character, dignity, and decency, qualities evident to his family and to all those who were fortunate enough to have known him; 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 James J. Snyder, longtime chairman of the Cattaraugus County Legislature, beloved family man and distinguished businessman; and be it further

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