

2023-J1427

Senate Resolution No. 1427

BY: Senator TEDISCO

COMMENDING John W. and Joseph E. Kehoe
posthumously upon the occasion of their designation
as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor
bestowed upon an individual by the New York State
Senate

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York,
who have served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this
country's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace
in peacetime, deserve a special salute from this esteemed Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend John W.
and Joseph E. Kehoe posthumously upon the occasion of their designation
as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an
individual by the New York State Senate, to be celebrated at Schenectady
County's Honor-A-Veteran ceremony on Saturday, September 30, 2023, at
St. Luke's Church in Schenectady, New York; 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, Brothers John and Joseph Kehoe were born to Anna and Hugh
Kehoe; John Kehoe was born on April 29, 1920 and Joseph Kehoe was born

on November 21, 1912; and

WHEREAS, Growing up in the Schenectady area, John and Joseph Kehoe attended Draper High School; before enlisting, John Kehoe was employed by General Electric Co. and Joseph Kehoe worked for American Locomotive Co.; and

WHEREAS, One month after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, John Kehoe answered the call to defend the Nation and entered the Army on January 9, 1942; he enrolled in the Aviation pre-flight school at Santa Ana, California; and

WHEREAS, Upon graduating from primary training at King City, John Kehoe was transferred to Lamoore Army flying school at Lamoore, California; he received his wings and Commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps at Williams Field in Chandler, Arizona; and

WHEREAS, Earning the prestigious title of First Lieutenant, John Kehoe was assigned overseas to the 669th Squadron of the 416th Bomber Group as a pilot of a B26 Tactical Bomber which interdicted tanks, rail marshaling yards, ammunition depots, and infantry positions; and

WHEREAS, Giving the ultimate sacrifice to protect our great Nation and vulnerable people around the world, John Kehoe was killed in action Christmas morning in 1944; and

WHEREAS, On that date, he showed extraordinary heroism in action when he encountered an intense flak on the bombing line to the target in

his aircraft; despite great damage to his aircraft, Lieutenant Kehoe maintained his position in the formation and his right engine burst into flames, spreading along the fuselage; sacrificing his own life, the

target was hit with amazing accuracy and shortly after, the aircraft exploded in midair; and

WHEREAS, For his courageous service during World War II, John Kehoe was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Air Medal with two Oak Clusters, and the Purple Heart Medal; and

WHEREAS, Entering as a Private into the Army on April 16, 1942, Joseph Kehoe began his service at the Army Armored Regiment at Camp Cooke, California; he went on to receive Basic Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky and then attended Desert Training in California; and

WHEREAS, Showing exemplary skill, Joseph Kehoe was an honor graduate of the Engineering School at Atlanta, Georgia; he also received a medal for Marksmanship; and

WHEREAS, Upon transfer to the Pittsburgh, California, Replacement Depot, Joseph Kehoe was assigned to the 44th Infantry Battalion, 6th Armored Division; and

WHEREAS, 46 days after his brother, Joseph Kehoe was killed in action on February 9, 1945; and

WHEREAS, Showing unfathomable selflessness, Joseph Kehoe started crawling to the aid of a wounded comrade in a direct line of fire from a nearby enemy machine gun; with utter disregard for his own safety, Private First Class Kehoe was instantly killed in his efforts, but his heroic action reflects the highest credit upon himself and the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, For his courageous service during World War II, Joseph Kehoe was awarded the Silver Star Medal and the Purple Heart Medal; and

WHEREAS, Buried next to each other in the Luxembourg American Cemetery, John W. and Joseph E. Kehoe will forever be preserved in history as heroes; and

WHEREAS, Residents of this great State must never forget the courage with which these men and women served their country, and must recognize that no greater debt is owed than that owed to those who gave their lives for their beloved Nation and to those who continue to be missing in action; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend John W. and Joseph E. Kehoe posthumously upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the families of John W. and Joseph E. Kehoe.