

## 2023-J2642

Senate Resolution No. 2642

BY: Senator RYAN

MOURNING the death of Gayle L. Syposs,  
distinguished citizen, admired public servant, and  
devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to  
citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor  
served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and this  
great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs of Tonawanda, New York, died on Saturday,  
November 11, 2023, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs distinguished herself in her profession and  
by her sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of  
her community; and

WHEREAS, Born Gayle L. Barr on August 17, 1943, to Ralph L. and Emma  
Barr, she was a 1961 graduate of Tonawanda High School, and went on to  
become a renowned trailblazer in the field of public service; and

WHEREAS, Joining her beloved Chauncey R. Syposs Jr. in marriage in  
1962, Gayle L. Syposs enjoyed a loving and admirable 54 years with her  
husband who passed in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs was an office manager for a local real

estate firm in the 1970s and owned a delicatessen on Broad Street a few doors away from her home in the 1980s; in 1989, she began working for the Erie County Board of Elections and was assistant deputy commissioner until 1996, when her job was reassigned during a budget crisis; she continued as a network coordinator until 2005; and

WHEREAS, Starting her political career in 1973, Gayle L. Syposs ran for Tonawanda Town Council, and was later appointed to the city's Citizens Advisory Committee; two years later, she won Democratic endorsement and claimed one of the two Third Ward seats; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs was a force of change; she spearheaded the committee that oversaw the introduction of cable television in the city, as well as chaired a study group to unify paramedic services with North Tonawanda; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, Gayle L. Syposs was the first woman to run for Tonawanda mayor; after a close but unsuccessful election, she reclaimed her Third Ward seat in 1981, and went on to serve a total of 12 years as the first woman elected to the City of Tonawanda Common Council; and

WHEREAS, During her tenure serving on the City Council, Gayle L. Syposs revived a plan to renovate the city's aging water treatment plant instead of getting water elsewhere at a higher price; she also advocated for centralizing police and fire dispatching, became a leading critic of residential development plans for the site of the former Continental Can Co. factory along the river, and successfully opposed establishing a campground in Niawanda Park; and

WHEREAS, Returning to the Council for a single term in the mid-1990s, she became a member of a new city charter revision committee

and saw a new charter go into effect in 1998 that shifted day-to-day responsibility for municipal operations away from the Council; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs became vice chair of the Erie County Democratic Committee in 2006, and served a single term as Tonawanda City Clerk from 2016 to 2018; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, Gayle L. Syposs was Chairwoman of the City of Tonawanda Democratic Committee for more than 20 years, served as chair of Erie County Democratic Town Chairs Association and was a New York State Democratic Committeewoman; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs's commitment to excellence and spirit of humanity carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Gayle L. Syposs is survived by two sons, Chauncey R. Syposs III and Derrick A. Syposs; a sister, Kathleen (Steve) Maguire; two grandchildren, Dr. Chauncey R. (Jessica) Syposs IV and Ariana Syposs; daughters-in-law, Trish, Betsy, and Kat; nephew, James (Kayla) Maguire; niece, Katie Keegan, and many other nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Gayle L. Syposs leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all she served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Gayle L. Syposs, distinguished citizen, admired public servant, and devoted member of her community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be

transmitted to the family of Gayle L. Syposs.