

2025-J826

Senate Resolution No. 826

BY: Senator COMRIE

HONORING Jack "Giacomo" Virdone posthumously upon the occasion of the co-naming of a Street in Queens, New York, in recognition of his remarkable life and commitment to community

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, Jack Virdone, known affectionately as "Giacomo," was a beloved figure in the Briarwood, Queens community and beyond; his deep admiration for authentic Italian cuisine and fine dining resonated with countless diners since his acquisition of Alba Pizzeria & Ristorante in 1984; and

WHEREAS, The impact Jack Virdone has had on the Briarwood community and beyond is worthy of this esteemed recognition; a special street co-renaming ceremony will be held on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at the intersection of 84th Drive and Queens Boulevard in Queens, New York; and

WHEREAS, Born in Sicily, Jack Virdone's journey from a young immigrant to a celebrated restaurateur is a testament to his passion for traditional Italian cuisine and unwavering commitment to quality; Alba

Pizzeria & Ristorante, under his leadership, served as a destination where patrons could experience genuine Italian hospitality and cuisine; and

WHEREAS, Jack Virdone, loyal to classic recipes and traditional cooking methods, was renowned for his staple dishes such as Chicken Francese and his "Shrimp Sinatra"; he also took great pride in offering healthy options, including a variety of salads, vegetables, and fish dishes, all while never compromising quality and flavor; and

WHEREAS, One of Jack Virdone's crowning achievements was catering for Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to New York City in 2008; this prestigious event underscored the dedicated chef's reputation for excellence and brought international recognition to Alba Pizzeria & Ristorante; and

WHEREAS, Jack Virdone's meticulous attention to detail and his insistence on using only the finest ingredients earned him accolades from both local patrons and distinguished guests alike; and

WHEREAS, Jack Virdone distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, When Briarwood faced the closure of other beloved establishments, Jack Virdone stood confident and unwavering in his commitment to keeping Alba Pizzeria & Ristorante open, protecting the

renowned and beloved legacy he had so diligently crafted over decades of hard work and passion; and

WHEREAS, Jack Virdone's commitment to excellence, and his spirit of

humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; he was an avid supporting of local Lions Clubs in his community, making notable contributions to their fundraising initiatives and offering his establishment as a place to host their events; he additionally supported Hispanic organizations, helping to raise funds for kitchen projects and school supplies for communities in Ecuador, Argentina, and Columbia; and

WHEREAS, Further, Jack Virdone, ever proving his investment in the success of his fellow New Yorkers, donated a scoreboard to Archbishop Molloy High School, and regularly donated pizzas to local public schools and community organizations such as the Community Association and Samaritan Village; it was also important to Jack Virdone to support park cleanups throughout Briarwood as well as to contribute meals to the Friends of the Queens Public Library, demonstrating his unrelenting commitment to community development and environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, Marking the end of an era at Alba Pizzeria & Ristorante, Jack Virdone died in 2020; he leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; and

WHEREAS, This event will not just celebrate a name change, but will inspire the Queens community and beyond to adopt Jack Virdone's dedication to community, philanthropy, and the pursuit of excellence in all undertakings, ensuring that his influence continues to shine brightly in our daily lives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Jack "Giacomo" Virdone posthumously upon the occasion of the co-naming of a Street in Queens, New York, in recognition of his remarkable life and commitment to community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Jack Virdone, and to Alba Pizzeria & Ristorante.