

2025-J837

Senate Resolution No. 837

BY: Senator STEC

MOURNING the death of John McDonald Sr., retired
Essex County District Attorney, distinguished public
servant, and devoted family man

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who,
through their selfless commitment and dedication, have served to better
the quality of life in our community and have had a measurable positive
impact on the lives of its residents; John McDonald Sr. was one such
individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this
Legislative Body records the passing of John McDonald Sr. of
Ticonderoga, New York, on Saturday, April 12, 2025, at the age of 94,
noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, John McDonald Sr. served with integrity, dedication, and
distinction as Essex County District Attorney (DA) from 1972 to 1993,
including as the county's first full-time DA beginning in 1979; and

WHEREAS, A man of courage and legal acumen, John McDonald Sr.
successfully prosecuted some of the region's most serious and
challenging cases, including securing a guilty plea from Adirondack
serial killer Robert Garrow Sr. in 1975, bringing long-awaited justice
to victims and their families; and

WHEREAS, Known for his deep, booming voice and formidable presence, John McDonald Sr. was a well-respected figure in the courtroom and in his community, where he pursued his work often from the county law library in Elizabethtown, supported only by a small staff; and

WHEREAS, Beyond his service in the courtroom, John McDonald Sr. was a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, having served during the Korean War; a committed civic leader, he presided over the Black Watch Memorial Library in Ticonderoga for four decades and led the board of Ausable Chasm, a family legacy and treasured tourist destination; and

WHEREAS, A proud graduate of Port Henry High School, Dartmouth College, and Albany Law School, John McDonald Sr. cherished his years at Camp Dudley in Westport, where he was profoundly shaped by the camp's motto, "The Other Fellow First," a guiding principle that defined his approach to life and service; and

WHEREAS, A devoted husband, father, and brother, John McDonald Sr. is survived by his beloved wife of 61 years, Anne B. McDonald; his children, Mary P. McDonald, John C. McDonald Jr. (Andrea), and Bridget McDonald Fawcett (Donald); and his brother, Thomas McDonald; and

WHEREAS, John McDonald Sr.'s infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through his family's vivid and happy memories; his insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope to the countless lives he touched; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, John McDonald Sr. leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing man; 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 John McDonald Sr., recognizing his distinguished record of public service and expressing its deepest condolences to his family, friends, and the community he so faithfully served; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of John McDonald Sr.