

2025-K409

Assembly Resolution No. 409

BY: M. of A. Conrad

MOURNING the death of Assistant Chief of
Detectives Gregory Simonian of the Buffalo Police
Department

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 the great
State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Chief of Detectives Gregory Simonian of
Tonawanda, New York, died on Monday, April 14, 2025, at the age of 96;
and

WHEREAS, Assistant Chief of Detectives Gregory Simonian
distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication
and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; he was
proud of his service to his fellow citizens of Buffalo, enjoying his
investigative work; and

WHEREAS, Officers and supervisors describe Gregory Simonian as a
police officer who conducted investigations methodically and "by the
book"; however, he was also among the friendliest and most personable
supervisors in the Department, willing to guide younger officers as he
was guided during his early days as an officer; and

WHEREAS, Gregory Simonian was born to Armenian immigrants, John and May Simonian, and had three siblings; proud of his Armenian heritage, he was raised on Buffalo's West Side; at the age of 10, he began working in his father's tavern; he attended Buffalo's public schools but never finished high school so he could work with his family; however, he served in the United States National Guard; and

WHEREAS, Gregory Simonian's father, who ran his popular tavern for 40 years, and his Bulgarian mother, who spoke five languages, inspired their children to work hard and strive to help others; and

WHEREAS, One day in 1952, while working in the tavern, Gregory Simonian's friend informed him that the Buffalo Police Department was hiring, and he and his younger brother, Barton, took the police examination and were both hired in 1953; and

WHEREAS, In 1973, after serving for years as Detective, Detective Sergeant, and Lieutenant, Gregory Simonian was appointed Assistant Chief of Detectives; for 37 years, he investigated thousands of crimes, earning a reputation as one of the most widely respected officers to work in the city during the 1900s; he was also a vital part of organizing the burglary task force and headed several units, including arson, fraud, and automobile theft; and

WHEREAS, Spending most of his career in the Detective Bureau, Gregory Simonian served his community well, retiring from police work in December of 1990; and

WHEREAS, Gregory Simonian was a vital member of his community and left an extraordinary impression; he was a dedicated and courageous police officer with enthusiasm for his job and the Buffalo Police Department and pride in representing law enforcement; he was unequalled

in his gifts of legal knowledge, thoroughness, competence, mentorship, and professionalism; and

WHEREAS, In his personal life, Gregory Simonian enjoyed reading and attended St. Hagop Armenian Apostolic Church in Niagara Falls; after his retirement from the Buffalo Police Department, he continued working part-time at a medical billing company, operated by his daughters, until shortly before his death; and

WHEREAS, Remembered by family members, friends, and colleagues as a mentor, teacher, and role model, Gregory Simonian had positively affected many individuals who were fortunate to know him and work with him; this legendary officer and civil servant was as impeccable about his attention to detail, work ethic, and integrity as he was about the way he was dressed; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Chief of Detectives Gregory Simonian is survived by his daughters, May (late Russell) Sammarco and Patrice (late Robert) Swanson; son, John G. (Lisa) Simonian and family; dancing partner, Melanie Santoro; sister, Barbara (late Samuel) Hagopian; grandchildren, Rachel (Jeffrey) Falk, Renee (Robert) Delmont, Suzanne (Ronald) Ammerman, Ashley (Robert) Wasinger, Jillian (Brendan Young) Burgio, Kevin (Robin) Simonian, Robert (Gina) Swanson and family, and Heather (Beau) Harper and family; great-grandchildren, Christian (Victoria) Falk, Jackson Falk, Alessio Sammarco, Robert Delmont, Jr., Ronald Ammerman, Jr., Ryan Ammerman, Robert Wasinger, Amerie Wasinger, and Mia Wasinger; and many nieces and nephews; he was predeceased by his loving wife of 56 years, Elizabeth (Miller) Simonian; parents, John and May Simonian; brothers, Barton (late Mildred) Simonian and John (late Rose Ann) Simonian; and daughter, Rosanne (late Randall) Burgio; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of

compassion, Gregory Simonian 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; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Assistant Chief of Detectives Gregory Simonian of the Buffalo Police Department; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Assistant Chief of Detectives Gregory Simonian.