

2009-J583

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending New York State Trooper Joseph E. Decker upon the occasion of his designation as the 2008 Troop F Trooper of the Year

WHEREAS, The quality and sanctity of community life are cherished values, worthy of safeguarding; this Legislative Body welcomes the opportunity to honor those who serve to preserve and protect them, lauding particularly their unwavering courage and dedication in the daily performance of their duties; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend New York State Trooper Joseph E. Decker upon the occasion of his designation as the 2008 Troop F Trooper of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Recognized with this high honor for his bravery, Trooper Decker, based at Troop F's Roscoe, New York barracks, is revered in the hamlet for jumping into raging floodwaters, sometimes without the protection of ropes or flotation vests, risking his own life to save others; and

WHEREAS, On July 23, 2008, Roscoe, a fishing town in northern Sullivan County, was struck by its second flash flood in two years; Trooper Decker and his partner, Trooper Steve Johnstone, found Robin Francisco and her 11-year-old daughter, Ali, standing on their front porch, trapped in their home on Route 206 waiting for help; and

WHEREAS, Trooper Decker and Trooper Johnstone tied neon green rope to a guardrail and tossed the other end to Robin Francisco, who tied it to a wooden post on the porch; and

WHEREAS, Trooper Decker then waded through the waist-high raging water surrounding the house; holding strong against the flow, he bear-hugged the young girl and brought her safely to Trooper Johnstone on the other side; he then walked through the rising water a second time, delivering the child's mother to safety as well; and

WHEREAS, When the rain ended and Trooper Decker and Trooper Johnstone returned to the house hours later, they found the front porch where Robin and Ali Francisco had been standing was gone, washed away by the

flood's powerful current; and

WHEREAS, The previous year, on June 19, 2007, Trooper Joseph E. Decker was similarly among the first responders, assisting the Roscoe Fire Department with the potential closing of State Route 206, near the Sullivan County/Delaware County line, due to heavy rains and quickly rising waters; and

WHEREAS, Trooper Decker, who carried the stranded through chest-high water, delivering them to higher ground while a vicious flash flood broke homes into splinters and tossed cars, including his own State Police SUV, about as if they were weightless, earned an esteemed New York State Police Superintendent's Commendation Award in recognition and appreciation of his courage, professionalism and outstanding performance on that day; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate to recognize and commend such outstanding law enforcement officers as Trooper Joseph E. Decker for their valued contributions, publicly acknowledging them for their bravery, commitment, and selfless dedication to preserving the quality and fabric of life; and

WHEREAS, Having demonstrated an unconditional commitment to serve and protect, Trooper Joseph E. Decker has justly earned the respect and admiration of his peers, the community, and this Legislative Body, and is worthy and due full praise and recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend New York State Trooper Joseph E. Decker upon the occasion of his designation as the 2008 Troop F Trooper of the Year; and be it further RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Trooper Joseph E. Decker.