

2011-J1536

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Grete Waitz, an outstanding athlete and marathon icon, and recognizing the significance of her life accomplishments

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge and pay tribute to those esteemed individuals within the State of New York who distinguished themselves through outstanding achievements in worldwide athletic competition; and

WHEREAS, Grete Waitz was born as Grete Andersen on October 1, 1953, in Oslo, Norway; she died on April 19, 2011; and

WHEREAS, Grete Waitz accomplished the following as a marathon runner: won the national junior titles in Norway in the 400 meter and 800 meter races; at the age of 17, set the European junior record for the 1500 meters race with a time of 4:17; as an adolescent, won a bronze medal at the European Championship in 1974; set a new record in 1975 in the 3000 meters race in Oslo, Norway, with a time of 8:46:6, in which she lowered further the following year with a new record time of 8:45:4; won a gold medal in 1977 for the 3000 meters race at the IAAF World Cup in Dusseldorf, Germany; began running in the New York City Marathon in 1978 where she went on to win nine races; and

WHEREAS, For 25 years Grete Waitz served as the ambassador for the JPMorgan Chase Corporate Challenge Series where she advised full-time workers on ways to live with decent health; and

WHEREAS, Grete Waitz retired from a career as a marathoner after her last run in the New York City Marathon of 1992; and

WHEREAS, Grete Waitz is widely acknowledged for helping to promote marathon and long-distance running for women; in Norway she is a sporting legend, having an annual race named in her honor; and

WHEREAS, The New York Road Runners club annually sponsors "Grete's

Great Gallop," a half-marathon dedicated in Grete Waitz's honor; and
WHEREAS, After being diagnosed with cancer in 2005, Grete Waitz established the cancer care foundation called "Aktiv Mot Krett", or Active
Against Cancer in 2007; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the significance of Grete Waitz' success as a professional runner, considering the lack of support and respect female athletes received during her early years as an emerging marathoner; and

WHEREAS, Grete Waitz is survived by her husband, Jack Waitz, and two brothers, Jan Andersen and Arild Andersen; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit, imbued with a sense of compassion, and comforted by a loving family, Grete Waitz leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who knew her or have been affected by her work; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the untimely death of Grete Waitz; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Grete Waitz.