

2011-K1585

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Nikolas Wallenda for his accomplishments as an American high-wire artist, acrobat and daredevil

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to those individuals whose commitment and creative talents have contributed to the entertainment and cultural enrichment of the citizens of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Nikolas Wallenda for his accomplishments as an American high-wire artist, acrobat and daredevil; and

WHEREAS, A direct descendant of Karl Wallenda, the founder of The Flying Wallendas, Nikolas Wallenda is the seventh generation of the Wallenda Family; and

WHEREAS, Born January 24, 1979, in Sarasota, Florida, Nikolas Wallenda began performing with his family at an early age; and

WHEREAS, Nikolas Wallenda first performed at the age of two, dressed as a clown; he began walking the wire at age four, and had his first professional wire performance at 13; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, while 19 years old, Nikolas Wallenda participated in the re-creation of Karl Wallenda's seven-person pyramid on the high-wire in Detroit, Michigan, by his father, Terry, and mother, Delilah, after which he decided to make a career of it; and

WHEREAS, In 2001, Nikolas Wallenda and his family appeared at Japan's Kurashiki Tivoli Park, setting the Guinness World Record for an eight-person pyramid on the high-wire; and

WHEREAS, On October 15, 2008, during a live broadcast of "Today", Wallenda walked and then bicycled across a suspended high-wire 13 and 1/2 stories above the ground off the roof of the Prudential Center in Downtown Newark, New Jersey, for a GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS world record for longest and highest bicycle on a high-wire; and

WHEREAS, Nikolas Wallenda and his wife, Erendira, own and operate Wallendas Inc., a premier entertainment company that produces thrill shows around the world; they also have three children, Yanni, Amadaos

and Evita; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, Nikolas Wallenda has developed many broad scale productions for amusement parks and similar venues all over the world, including water stunts, diving and other daredevil exploits, often featuring him and his wife; and

WHEREAS, They have worked with their respective families on acts including sway poles, the high-wire, sky-walks, the wheel of death, incline motorcycles, silks, lyras, the cloud swing, motorcycles in a cage, and even a dog act; and

WHEREAS, In 2007 and 2008, Nikolas Wallenda was a featured performer in the Ringling Brothers' production, Bellobration, performing with Bello Nock on a newly contrived, double version of the Wheel of Steel; the double wheel of steel was invented, designed, and constructed by Wallenda and Nock; and

WHEREAS, On June 4, 2011, Nikolas Wallenda completed a high-wire crossing between the two towers of the ten-story Condado Plaza Hotel in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on a wire stretched 121-feet above the pavement; and

WHEREAS, On June 15, 2012, Nikolas Wallenda walked across the Niagara Falls on high-wire crossing New York to Ontario, a stunt that has not been allowed for over 100 years; and

WHEREAS, He crossed the Niagara River and its 200 feet (61 m) deep gorge from the American side at Goat Island and made his way across the

river to land at the Canadian side near the site of Table Rock; the American Falls and Bridal Veil Falls were behind him and to his right, while the Canadian Falls were on his immediate left and behind; and

WHEREAS, The event was highly anticipated around the world, and permission for such a stunt could be given theoretically only once every 20 years; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the entertainment value of this highly anticipated event, there were distinct economic advantages to the local economies on both sides of the border with the large draw of tourists who gathered in record numbers at the falls; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to those individuals of historic and artistic significance whose creative talents have contributed to the cultural enrichment of our communities and our Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Nikolas Wallenda for his accomplishments as an American high-wire artist, acrobat and daredevil; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Nikolas Wallenda.