

2013-J3851

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Thomas C. Ferraro, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

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, Thomas "Tom" C. Ferraro, a community leader and life-long resident of Rochester, New York, died on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at the age of 67; and

WHEREAS, Tom Ferraro was born on October 10, 1946, the son of Marion and Alfonso Ferraro; as a youth, he was known for his energetic spirit and great sense of humor; he spent his spare time playing baseball as a catcher and was a great pitcher, as well; and

WHEREAS, As an adult, Tom Ferraro developed incredible skills at helping others develop their talents, and consistently provided people with the tools to reach their full potential; he also showed an incredible sense of compassion towards those who were less fortunate, particularly those who did not have enough to eat; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, Tom Ferraro appeared on the Eddie Meath Show to make a community wide appeal for food donations; a representative of Thomas' English Muffins called with a massive donation of bread products, but he would have to find a way to transport them; thinking quickly, Tom Ferraro borrowed an old school bus and started his own regional food bank, Foodlink; and

WHEREAS, Under this remarkable man's dedicated leadership, the Foodlink Foundation grew from distributing 600,000 pounds of food in 1983, to providing close to 18 million pounds of food in 2014, to needy families in its 10 county service area; and

WHEREAS, Tom Ferraro would serve as executive director of Foodlink for over 36 years; at the time of its incorporation, it was one of the first food banks in the United States and has since served as an exemplary model for other organizations to emulate; and

WHEREAS, Tom Ferraro has also served on the original Feeding America Board of Directors, helping to develop food banking nationwide; furthermore, he assisted in the creation of the New York State Department of Health's Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) which continues to provide millions of dollars to hunger relief, food safety, and nutrition education programs each year; and

WHEREAS, In addition to food donations, Tom Ferraro sought to move the focus beyond the symptoms of hunger and toward its root causes; he firmly believed food banks have a responsibility to engage in workforce and economic development initiatives, to assist in building the capacity of other nonprofit organizations, and to be leaders in both public health and broader food system reforms; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed humanitarian has been the recipient of numerous distinguished community awards, one of which was the Inaugural Farash Prize for Social Entrepreneurship, a prestigious community award aimed at recognizing the best innovative approaches to our society's most pressing problems; and

WHEREAS, Tom Ferraro distinguished himself as a lifelong anti-hunger advocate, community leader, and visionary entrepreneur by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of those he so diligently served; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his father, Alfonso Ferraro; Thomas C. Ferraro is survived by his mother, Marion (Carr); his wife, Regine Calvar; three sons, Michael Vito Ferraro, John Thomas Ferraro-Calvar, and Philippe E.

Ferraro-Calvar; and two granddaughters, Victoria and Isabelle; as well as several aunts and cousins; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Thomas C. Ferraro 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 Thomas C. Ferraro, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Thomas C. Ferraro, and The Foodlink Foundation.