

## 2015-K9

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating the remarkable life and achievements of the Honorable Mario Matthew Cuomo, 52nd Governor of the State of New York, and expressing our profound sorrow upon his passing

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those individuals of distinguished purpose whose lives have been committed to the pursuit of excellence and to the care and advancement of all people, and whose character and conduct have bestowed honor upon our great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Mario M. Cuomo passed away on Thursday, January 1, 2015, in Manhattan, at the age of 82; and

WHEREAS, Born in Queens on June 15, 1932, Mario Matthew Cuomo was the fourth child of Italian immigrants from the province of Salerno, Andrea and Immacolata Cuomo, who came to the United States in pursuit of opportunity and the realization of the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, Mario M. Cuomo grew up in the Queens neighborhood of South Jamaica imbued by his parents with a powerful love of family, a deep and abiding faith in God, a firm belief in the dignity of work and of the willingness to sacrifice, and an unflinching respect for self and for his responsibility to family and to his community; and

WHEREAS, In 1949, after graduating from St. John's Preparatory School in Queens, Mario M. Cuomo pursued his love of baseball, and at the age of 19, signed a contract to play centerfield for the Class D Brunswick Pirates in the Georgia-Florida League; after suffering an injury, he gave up his dream of playing professional baseball and attended St. John's University where he majored in Latin American studies, English and Philosophy, and graduated summa cum laude in 1953; and

WHEREAS, The recipient of a scholarship, Mario M. Cuomo enrolled in St. John's Law School where he was editor of the ST. JOHN'S LAW REVIEW,

a founding editor of THE CATHOLIC LAWYER, and ultimately graduated cum laude in 1956, tied for first in his class; and

WHEREAS, Mario M. Cuomo began his legal career serving as law clerk to Judge Adrian P. Burke of the New York State Court of Appeals, and in 1963, entered private practice joining the Brooklyn law firm of Corner, Weisbrod, Froeb & Charles, where he earned a reputation as a skilled debater and arbitrator while helping families save their homes and settling heated neighborhood disputes, and highly publicized court victories which made him an instant choice for political office; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, Mario M. Cuomo ran for the office of Lieutenant Governor, losing a three-way Democratic primary, and the following year, Governor Hugh Carey appointed him Secretary of State; in this capacity, he intervened in numerous statewide crises including a Mohawk Indian lands claim dispute, nursing home practice issues, and rent strikes; and WHEREAS, Four years later, Hugh L. Carey was reelected Governor of the State of New York, and Mario M. Cuomo was elected as Lieutenant Governor; and

WHEREAS, On November 2, 1982, at age 50, Mario M. Cuomo was elected the 52nd Governor of New York, defeating businessman Lewis E. Lehrman by approximately 180,000 votes; he would go on to win three terms as the State's Chief Executive; and

WHEREAS, A resolute leader known for his oratory, Governor Mario M. Cuomo was asked to deliver the keynote address at the 1984 Democratic National Convention; he described America as a "tale of two cities," and electrified the nation, making him a Democratic contender for the Presidency of the United States; and

WHEREAS, In September of 1984, Governor Mario M. Cuomo delivered the now famous speech entitled "Religious Belief and Public Morality: A

Catholic Governor's Perspective" at Notre Dame, which remains, in the words of Anna Quindlen, "one of the defining statements on the necessary distinctions between personal morality and public policy"; and

WHEREAS, Choosing not to run for the White House, Governor Mario M. Cuomo focused on strengthening his beloved State of New York, and together with the Legislature, guided the Empire State through two national recessions, investing to revitalize education and infrastructure, creating a large homeless assistance program, establishing programs to build high-tech research and development facilities, creating programs to serve the mentally ill and to address the burgeoning AIDS crisis, enacting the largest tax cut in state history at that time, and the first seat belt law; and

WHEREAS, Governor Mario M. Cuomo initiated the first major ethics law for public officials and appointed all of the judges to the New York State Court of Appeals including the first African American, the first Hispanic, and the first two women judges, including the first woman to serve as Chief Judge, The Honorable Judith Kaye; and

WHEREAS, Governor Mario M. Cuomo proclaimed 1988 the beginning of the Decade of the Child, 1989 the Year to Fight Drug Abuse, and when he won his third term as Governor in 1990, the Year of the Environment, advancing groundbreaking programs in support of each; and

WHEREAS, Following his extraordinary career in public office, Mario M. Cuomo returned to practice law in Manhattan where he worked for the law firm of Willkie & Farr Gallagher, while continuing to author books and deliver speeches; and

WHEREAS, Mario M. Cuomo is survived by his wife of 60 years, Matilda N. Cuomo, and by his five children, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Dr. Margaret I. Cuomo, Maria Cuomo Cole, Madeline Cuomo O'Donohue, and Christopher Cuomo, as well as 14 grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, The Family of New York has most certainly benefited from the love, compassion and humanist spirit Mario M. Cuomo brought to his work as our Governor, one of New York State's greatest leaders, but at heart, a man of profound faith who never lost touch with the values of his immigrant upbringing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations in a

moment of silent tribute to Mario M. Cuomo, whose generous and thoughtful concern for the welfare of others enhanced the lives of those so fortunate to have called him family, colleague, mentor and friend, and to express its deepest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-

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mitted to the family of Mario M. Cuomo.