

2015-J2494

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the dedication of the Operation Red Wings Memorial in memory of its service members upon the occasion of its 10th Anniversary on June 28, 2015

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate events of significance as well as to honor members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have courageously sacrificed their lives in order to preserve the principles of freedom and democracy for all the citizens of this great Nation; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the dedication of the Operation Red Wings Memorial in memory of its service members upon the occasion of its 10th Anniversary to be observed on Sunday, June 28, 2015, at Long Island MacArthur Airport Veterans' Plaza in Ronkonkoma, New York; and

WHEREAS, On June 28, 2005, a four-man Navy SEAL Team comprised of Lieutenant Michael P. Murphy, Sonar Technician Matthew G. Axelson, Gunner's Mate Danny P. Dietz and Petty Officer Marcus Luttrell were conducting a reconnaissance mission in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan when their position was discovered by Taliban militants; and

WHEREAS, A fierce gun battle ensued lasting for two hours; even though all four Navy SEALs were badly wounded in the attack, they continued to fight; and

WHEREAS, Realizing his team was outnumbered and in grave danger, Lieutenant Michael Murphy willingly exposed himself to intense enemy gunfire in an effort to transmit a call for support to Bagram Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Michael Murphy's radio distress call was successful and in his final act of bravery, he continued to engage the enemy

until he was mortally wounded as a result of his actions on behalf of his team; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of Lieutenant Michael Murphy's undaunted courage and selfless actions, he was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor; and

WHEREAS, SEAL team members Danny Dietz and Matt Axelson continued to fight the Taliban militants, but also died fighting the enemy; and

WHEREAS, Marcus Luttrell was the only survivor of the four man team of Navy SEALs, all of whom exemplified the virtues of the SEAL ethos and Navy core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment; and

WHEREAS, An MH-47 Chinook helicopter, carrying eight Navy SEALs and eight Army Night Stalkers, was sent to help the team; however, it was struck by enemy fire, causing it to crash, and leaving no survivors; those killed in the crash were Staff Sergeant Shamus O. Goare, Chief Warrant Officer Corey J. Goodnature, Sergeant Kip A. Jacoby, Sergeant 1st Class Marcus V. Muralles, Master Sergeant James W. Ponder III, Major Stephen C. Reich, Sergeant 1st Class Michael L. Russell, and Chief Warrant Officer Chris J. Scherkenbach; and

WHEREAS, Fellow SEAL members who died fighting the enemy in Operation Red Wings on that day were Lieutenant Commander Erik S. Kristensen, Chief Petty Officer Jacques J. Fontan, Senior Chief Petty Officer Daniel R. Healy, Petty Officer 1st Class Jeffery A. Lucas, Lieutenant Michael M. McGreevy, Jr., Petty Officer 2nd Class James E. Suh, Petty Officer 1st Class Jeffrey S. Taylor, and Petty Officer Second Class Eric Shane Patton; and

WHEREAS, The Naval Special Warfare community will forever remember the heroic efforts and sacrifices of its brave service members who died in service to their country on June 28, 2005; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited their patriotism both at home and abroad, these men demonstrated their love for their country and merit forevermore, the highest respect of the people of this State and our Nation;

and

WHEREAS, A new division of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, The LT Michael Murphy Division, was established on Long Island in August of 2012; the Naval Sea Cadets Corps is a non-profit youth program for Americans age 11 through high school which instills leadership skills and the values of teamwork, camaraderie and service; and

WHEREAS, The banner of freedom will always wave over our beloved New York and all of America, the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave; and

WHEREAS, The freedoms and security we cherish as Americans come at a very high price for those serving in the military and their families in times of conflict; it is fitting and proper that we who are the beneficiaries of those who risk their lives, leaving their families behind, express our appreciation and eternal gratitude for their sacrifices and courageous acts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the dedication of the Operation Red Wings Memorial in memory of its service members upon the occasion of its 10th Anniversary; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the families of the service members who participated in Operation Red Wings.