

2015-J5721

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of former New York State Senator Thomas W. Libous, dedicated political leader and strong advocate for the people of this great Empire State

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow that this Legislative Body, representing the people of the State of New York, is moved this day to pay tribute to an eminent gentleman of indomitable faith and dedication whose public service and countless accomplishments will forever stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, Thomas W. Libous, a native of Johnson City, New York, died on Tuesday, May 3, 2016, at the age of 63; and

WHEREAS, Born on April 16, 1953, in Binghamton, New York, Thomas W. Libous grew up in Johnson City, and graduated from Johnson City High School, where he was President of his Senior Class; and

WHEREAS, Furthering his education, Thomas W. Libous attended Broome Community College before earning his Bachelor's degree in both Marketing and Finance with honors from SUNY Utica; and

WHEREAS, Thomas W. Libous' interest in politics led him to work on campaigns for his Uncle Alfred, who was serving as the Mayor of Binghamton; and

WHEREAS, In 1983, Thomas W. Libous began his political career after being elected to the City Council in a South Side district in Binghamton; he was re-elected for another term, however events in Albany would soon change the course of his career; and

WHEREAS, After New York State Senate Majority Leader Warren M. Anderson announced that he would not seek re-election, he publicly endorsed Thomas W. Libous, who immediately filed his intention to run for Anderson's Senate seat; his career decision was proven to be the right one when, within a very few years, he was selected to serve as Deputy

Majority Leader, and in 2010, he was named Chairman of the Senate Republican Campaign Committee; and

WHEREAS, In terms of policy, Senator Thomas W. Libous built a reputation as an advocate for disabled people and childhood literacy; and

WHEREAS, Helping kids was always an important priority to Senator Thomas W. Libous; he proudly founded two local programs specifically for families: YES! Safe Choices for Kids, which taught kids about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and BOOKS, which encouraged kids to become better readers; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, Senator Thomas W. Libous founded the Student Community Service Awards through a partnership with WBNG-TV and Broome-Tioga BOCES to award scholarships to high school seniors based on community volunteer work rather than grades; this vital program awarded scholarships to over 400 local students to attend college in New York State; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, Senator Thomas W. Libous established Buy From the Backyard to encourage buying locally grown produce, and six years later, he partnered with UHS and Lourdes to create I Turned Pro to increase prostate cancer awareness; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thomas W. Libous was a strong supporter of Special Olympics in Binghamton; he spent quality time with the athletes, ran alongside of them during their events, and handed ribbons out at the end of the day; and

WHEREAS, During his career, he chaired numerous committees, including Transportation, Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities; throughout his illustrious tenure, he worked tirelessly as an advocate for individuals with Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, As chair of the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee and the Select Committee on the Disabled, Senator Thomas W. Libous championed initiatives to protect and improve services for the

most vulnerable New Yorkers by authoring legislation to provide tax credits to employers who hire individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thomas W. Libous fought for community Workforce Reinvestment to ensure state dollars followed patients moving from institutions into the community; he also wrote legislation to adopt Reasonable Accommodations for those with disabilities into state law, and created the Traumatic Brain Injury Program (TBI) to offer those who have a TBI a chance to live a more normal life in their community; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Senator Thomas W. Libous introduced Kendra's Law, which provides assisted outpatient treatment for individuals unlikely to survive in the community without supervision; the law was named after Kendra Webdale, a young woman who died in 1999, after being pushed in front of a New York City subway train by an individual in the community who was not receiving treatment for his mental illness; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thomas W. Libous, affectionately known as "The Boss" by his staff, was a resolute and great voice for the Southern Tier; his zeal and dedication to his constituents, his ability to put together deals, and his vision for the future helped his community persevere during times of economic change while continuing to enhance the quality of life of all citizens, ensuring a positive business, institutional and educational climate, and providing all essential services; and

WHEREAS, During the aftermath of the devastating floods of 2006 and 2011, Senator Thomas W. Libous went above and beyond to do everything he could to help those in need; he procured local grants for volunteer fire departments, secured buyout grants, and diligently sought aid from neighboring states, as well as rode along with a Red Cross truck through the towns of Conklin, Kirkwood, Owego and Bainbridge handing out food, water and cleaning supplies; and

WHEREAS, His 14 terms of office benefitted the Southern Tier community, which was evident in sports venues such as NYSEG Stadium, the ice rink at the Broome Community College, bringing the PGA Champions Tour's Dick's Sporting Goods Open to Endicott, transforming the B.C. Open from

a small regional tournament to a nationally recognized event drawing more than 80,000 fans each year, and his unremitting commitment to keeping the Binghamton Mets Baseball Team in the city, the farm team of his beloved New York Mets, as well as bringing the Ottawa Senators Hockey League affiliate to Binghamton, to infrastructure improvements, to capi-

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tal development at Broome's institutions of higher learning including the Binghamton University Event Center, and Binghamton University's School of Pharmacy; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thomas W. Libous worked tirelessly to grow the Southern Tier's economy and improve the quality of life of all its residents; he was instrumental in the purchase of the IBM-Endicott campus and its microelectronics operation by a consortium of investors, from which Endicott Interconnect Technologies was formed in 2002 and employed more than 2,000 workers at its peak; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, Senator Thomas W. Libous negotiated the development aid package for Maines Paper which led to 800 jobs and a boost in annual economic activity for Broome County; and

WHEREAS, Thomas W. Libous was a gentle man, beyond the ordinary, and an unforgettable person of generosity and good will; he was truly a man of values and commitment, with a warm smile he generously gave for the benefit of his community; and

WHEREAS, Loyal friend, trusted advisor, ardent fighter for the causes in which he so strongly believed, the accomplishments of Senator Thomas W. Libous are legend; and

WHEREAS, Survived by his wife, Frances, their two sons, Nicholas and Matthew (Katie), and a grandson, Campbell Jude, Thomas W. Libous will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of former New York State Senator Thomas W. Libous, and

to offer its sincerest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Thomas W. Libous.