

## 2015-J5953

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Walter E. Hughes upon the occasion of his induction into the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame on May 24, 2016

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this country's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace in peacetime, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with long-standing tradition, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Walter E. Hughes upon the occasion of his induction into the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame on May 24, 2016; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame inductees are members of any branch of the United States Armed Forces which include Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, and Marine Corps; these exceptional men and women are chosen for this prestigious honor based on either service in combat or notable work performed after discharge from the service; and

WHEREAS, Walter E. Hughes was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1925; at the young age of 12, he worked as a deckhand on his stepfather's tugboat for three dollars a week; when the vessel was pushed into auxiliary service at the start of the war, Walter became a merchant seaman at 14; and

WHEREAS, Four years later, Walter E. Hughes entered into the service of the United States Army, proudly serving his country during World War II; as a member of the 82nd Airborne, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, he took part in some of the most famous battles and missions of the war; and

WHEREAS, In 1944, Private Walter E. Hughes made a combat jump into the

Waal River in Holland, during Operation Market Garden, the largest airborne operation ever conducted; Walter's unit of 240 paratroopers came under continuous enemy fire from the air and continued across the river in collapsible paddle boats; even though 48 men were killed in 10 minutes, the mission was deemed a success; years later, a movie, entitled "A Bridge Too Far" was made about this daring operation; and WHEREAS, This valiant soldier also survived the very dangerous Waal River crossing at Nijmegen, Holland, coming out with shrapnel wounds to both his shoulder and back, and was the sole survivor of a mortar attack launched on the banks of the Rhine River; and

WHEREAS, After this attack, Private Walter E. Hughes spent three weeks in a Paris hospital recovering from his wounds; after being told his foot needed to be amputated, he defied medical advice and left the hospital, returning to the 82nd Airborne aboard a local Red Ball Express; at the close of the war, he took part in the liberation of Camp Wobbelin in Ludwigslust, Germany; and

WHEREAS, Private Walter E. Hughes was honorably discharged from the United States Army after receiving two Purple Heart medals, the Bronze Star, and France's Legion of Honor; he was honored to have a Belgian postage stamp issued bearing his image as he charged the enemy in the renowned Battle of the Bulge; and

WHEREAS, After his discharge in 1945, Walter E. Hughes returned to the United States and resumed his career in the tug boat industry, motoring up and down the eastern seaboard, the Hudson River and across our great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Walter E. Hughes and his wife, Mary, moved to Port Jervis, New York, in 1981; the couple were happily married for 56 wonderful years before she passed away; and

WHEREAS, On October 25, 2015, members of the Walter E. Hughes Tri-State Mid-Hudson Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Association gathered at the Erie Trackside Manor in Port Jervis to honor the war hero for which

the association was named, and to celebrate his upcoming 90th Birthday;  
and

WHEREAS, Today, Walter E. Hughes is active in veterans' affairs, and enjoys playing guitar as well as spending time with his friends; a prolific author, he wrote two books about his life on the water; 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 comes at a very high price for those serving in the military in times of conflict; it is fitting and proper that we who are the beneficiaries of those who risk their lives, must never forget the courage with which these men and women served their country; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation;  
now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Walter E. Hughes upon the occasion of his induction into the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame on May 24, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Walter E. Hughes.