

2015-J6145

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Robert Summerville, dedicated school board leader, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to honor the life and accomplishments of individuals whose enduring commitment and dedication significantly enhanced the quality of education in their community; and

WHEREAS, With deep regret this Legislative Body records the passing of Robert Summerville, dedicated school board leader, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community, on Saturday, May 21, 2016, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, The American public school system is a treasured institution; those individuals, such as Robert Summerville, who work to improve our schools and ensure that all children have access to quality educational programs merit the highest commendation of this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, Robert Summerville was born to Arthur Summerville and Lee Hall on March 2, 1936, in Bude, Mississippi; after high school, he attended Jackson State University; and

WHEREAS, After moving to New York, Robert Summerville studied at Nassau Community College and New York University, where he earned his Associate degree in Real Estate; and

WHEREAS, For more than 50 years, Robert Summerville was an integral part of the Roosevelt, New York, community; and

WHEREAS, After working in law enforcement for a decade, Robert Summerville owned and operated an oil-delivery business and chimney service for many years; during this time, he hosted a local radio program; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to the community in which he lived and worked, Robert Summerville was a member of numerous worthy organizations including the Roosevelt NAACP, Roosevelt Chamber of Commerce, Long Island

Progressive Coalition, Black Farmers Association, and New York Civil Liberties Union as well as the Roosevelt Watch Society; and

WHEREAS, A strong advocate for the children of Roosevelt, Robert Summerville served on the School Board on and off for 17 years; during a financial crisis, he was the Board's only elected member, serving as the only local voice for his community; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous leadership of Robert Summerville, the Roosevelt School District slowly climbed out of debt, freeing the middle school from state receivership and the stigma of being labelled a struggling school; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable man truly believed in the children of Roosevelt School District, demonstrating an impressive dedication, an unparalleled devotion and an unrelenting enthusiasm to continually improving the quality of educational programs and opportunities offered to its faculty and students as well as for the entire community; and

WHEREAS, Truly devoted to his position, Robert Summerville worked up to his last days to improve the schools, making them a place where students could thrive and flourish, and providing them the tools and skills to become successful citizens; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of his long and distinguished tenure on the Roosevelt School Board, Robert Summerville touched the lives of thousands of people, and the Long Island community he served; he leaves a legacy of learning and commitment which will long endure; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body is moved to mourn the death of Robert Summerville, a man of great fortitude, compassion and achievement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to pay tribute to the memory of Robert Summerville, to celebrate his life, and

to acknowledge the significance of his contributions to education in Roosevelt, New York and the entire State of New York; and be it further

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

mitted to the family of Robert Summerville.