

2015-J6461

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Edward F. O'Brien posthumously for his distinguished service to the sport of horse racing to be celebrated at Saratoga Race Course on July 31, 2016

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize the life and accomplishments of cherished citizens of the State of New York who distinguished themselves in their profession and in service to their community; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Edward F. O'Brien posthumously for his distinguished service to the sport of horse racing; a horse race will be named in his honor at Saratoga Race Course and will take place on Sunday, July 31, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Edward Francis O'Brien died on October 13, 2015, at the age of 59; and

WHEREAS, Born in the City of Albany, on August 23, 1956, Edward F. O'Brien was the son of Eileen E. Ruth and John "Jack" T. O'Brien Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Edward F. O'Brien made his radio debut during the show "Teenagers in Country Music" in 1970; his mother would drive him to station WOKO Radio very early each Saturday morning with his younger sister, Maureen, in tow; and

WHEREAS, Dusty Miller, the host, knew that this 14-year-old volunteer was a special individual and was going to become an outstanding talent; radio became Edward F. O'Brien's passion; and

WHEREAS, His booming voice, natural cadence, affability, quick wit, jeopardy-like intelligence, inspiration and ability to connect with people, made Ed a natural broadcaster and journalist; at the age of 15, Edward F. O'Brien was hired by local radio personality, Don Weeks, of

WGY Radio; Don's guidance and friendship helped shape Ed's continuing years in radio; and

WHEREAS, Boom Boom Brannigan from WABY Radio worked with Edward F. O'Brien in the 1970s when radio was at its best; love for radio broadcasting always stayed with him and he would jump back into radio in the 1990s at WTRY Radio; and

WHEREAS, Television sports broadcasting in the 1970s became Edward F. O'Brien's path when he was hired part-time at WNYT TV, Channel 13. Ed's incredible memory for sports statistics and his ability to create excitement in his play-by-play, led to his full-time sports reporting

with Rip Rowan when he was hired by WTEN TV, Channel 10 in 1977; and

WHEREAS, During the late 1970s and early 1980s, sports broadcasting and ESPN were on the cusp of something phenomenal and Edward F. O'Brien envisioned the global potential; he could have become a big television market-ESPN broadcaster, but when his daughter, Jaclyn, was born in 1983, he chose to be close to her in the Albany area and share in her parenting; with his daughter he found the most happiness and was a loving, kind, caring and protective father; and

WHEREAS, Edward F. O'Brien was fully involved in Bethlehem Tomboys Softball as a manager, coach and cheerleader; his support and unwavering devotion helped Jackie become a Division 1 softball player at The University at Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the Yankees and softball, Edward F. O'Brien loved the ponies, especially racing at Saratoga Race Course; his television family felt his enthusiasm as they listened every morning to his horse knowledge from recounting former races to trying to handicap upcoming Triple Crown stakes; and

WHEREAS, Edward F. O'Brien loved traveling to the Saratoga Race Course with his brother, Dick, talking with patrons and betting exactas; and

WHEREAS, Edward F. O'Brien began his illustrious career with WRGB TV in 1991 as a morning newscaster and producer; he co-anchored the morning

news with many exceptionally talented and supportive colleagues and friends through his 24-year career at Channel 6; and

WHEREAS, His faithful viewers loved Ed's banter, presentation, intelligence and genuine smile as they drank their first cup of coffee of the day with him; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his parents, Edward F. O'Brien is survived by his daughter, Jaclyn "Jackie" Bailey O'Brien; best friend, Kelly Wagner; brothers, Richard (Barbara Fidanza) and Timothy; sisters, Mary O'Brien Connair (Robin Troeger), Margaret O'Brien, and Maureen O'Brien McMullen (Timothy); and several nieces and nephews, Richard O'Brien, Erin O'Brien, Susan O'Brien Deeley (Paul), Cynthia O'Brien Kaiser (Joseph) and Brendan O'Brien (Kelly Young); as well as great-nephews, Jack Kaiser, P.J. and Matthew Deeley; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Edward F. O'Brien leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Edward F. O'Brien posthumously for his distinguished service to the sport of horse racing to be celebrated at Saratoga Race Course on July 31, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Edward F. O'Brien.