

2015-J6512

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring John W. and Katherine Gillespie posthumously upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor John W. and Katherine Gillespie posthumously upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate, to be celebrated at the Columbia County Honor A Veteran Ceremony on July 25, 2016, in Hudson, New York; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Senate Liberty Medal was established by resolution and is awarded to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, John William Gillespie was born November 10, 1892 in Brooklyn, New York, to William and Annie (Ryan) Gillespie; raised in New York City, working as a clerk he was inducted in the United States Army on March 28, 1917 in Brooklyn, New York; and

WHEREAS, After his initial training, John W. Gillespie was assigned to Battery B, 59th Artillery in France; he saw action in the St. Mihiel and

the Meuse Argonne offenses; his duties included the placing of communication panels to distinguish between contested forward positions; and WHEREAS, Private First Class John W. Gillespie was honorably discharged on February 5, 1919, at Fort Upton, New York; he enlisted in the National Guard and was assigned to 8th Co., 13th Coastal Defense Command; and

WHEREAS, Cited for his "excellent, honest and faithful" character, John W. Gillespie was again honorably discharged at the rank of 1st Sergeant on April 25, 1921; for his meritorious service, he was awarded the esteemed Victory Medal; and

WHEREAS, Katherine Sweeney was born February 25, 1897, in New York City to William J. and Annie (Gray) Sweeney; working as an executive secretary, she was inducted in the United States Navy on May 3, 1918; and

WHEREAS, After her initial training, Yeoman 1st Class Katherine Sweeney was assigned to the 3rd Naval District, USN Fleet Supply Base in South Brooklyn, New York; and

WHEREAS, Yeoman 1st Class Katherine Sweeney worked in the Provisions and Clothing Depot until she was honorably discharged on July 31, 1919 in Brooklyn, New York; and

WHEREAS, For her admirable service, Katherine Sweeney was awarded the respected Victory Button; and

WHEREAS, John W. Gillespie and Katherine Sweeney were married on June 1, 1922, in Brooklyn, New York, and together they raised two children, John William, Jr. and Dorothy Katherine; and

WHEREAS, John W. Gillespie worked as a banker for Hanover Trust Bank and the New York Federal Reserve while Katherine Gillespie worked at the New York Cotton Exchange as an executive secretary; and

WHEREAS, In mid-century the Gillespies moved to Copake, New York, where John was a member of Copake Grange; the couple remained communicants of Saint Bridget's Catholic Church in Copake Falls, New York,

until their deaths; and

WHEREAS, John W. Gillespie died on January 26, 1975, at the VA hospital in Albany, New York, at the age of 82, and was buried in Copake Falls, New York; and

WHEREAS, Katherine Gillespie died on October 31, 1986, at the VA hospital in Seattle, Washington, at the age of 89, and was buried beside her husband, John, in Copake Falls, New York; and

WHEREAS, John W. and Katherine Gillespie are survived by their two children, John and Dorothy, and seven grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited their patriotism both at home and abroad, John W. and Katherine Gillespie demonstrated their love for their country and merit forevermore the highest respect of their State and Nation; 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 John W. and Katherine Gillespie posthumously upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of John W. and Katherine Gillespie.