

2017-J640

Senate Resolution No. 640

BY: Senator KENNEDY

COMMENDING Robert "Rip" Simonick for working over 3,500 NHL games and for 46 years of distinguished service to the Buffalo Sabres

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay just tribute to those individuals who embody the true American spirit, attaining unprecedented success and personal achievement through personal courage, integrity, and dedicated effort; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Robert "Rip" Simonick for working over 3,500 NHL games and for 46 years of distinguished service to the Buffalo Sabres; and

WHEREAS, On Tuesday, October 18, 2016, Rip Simonick worked his 3,500th Buffalo Sabres hockey game in Calgary, Canada, making him the first professional hockey equipment manager to ever reach this auspicious milestone; and

WHEREAS, A fixture in Western New York since joining the Buffalo Bisons of the American Hockey League as a stick boy in 1964, Rip Simonick has been a staple in the locker room and on the road for the Buffalo Sabres for the past 46 years; and

WHEREAS, Raised in Buffalo's Old First Ward, Rip Simonick and his brother, Paul, could often be found playing street hockey after school; later, the brothers joined the local youth hockey Buffalo Regals organization; and

WHEREAS, While attending Buffalo State College, Rip Simonick was employed as a rink guard at Front Park; in 1970, he was hired by Coach Punch Imlach to join the newly formed Buffalo Sabres equipment staff running errands and doing grunt work for legendary trainer Frank Christie; and

WHEREAS, He quickly worked his way up to equipment manager, and over the past 44 years, no one in the Buffalo Sabres organization has had a greater influence on the hundreds of players which have worn a Sabres sweater than Rip Simonick; and

WHEREAS, As the NHL's longest-tenured equipment manager, and the only one in Buffalo Sabres history, Rip Simonick has taken on a myriad of responsibilities over the years; he has been an errand boy, a rink guard, a stick boy, a skate-sharpener, a friend, a mentor, and a father-figure, as well as someone to vent to and confide in; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his tenure, Rip Simonick has been there for 3,507 regular season games, and has worked under 17 coaches and 464 players; in addition, he worked three NHL All-Star games in 1974, 1989 and 2005; and

WHEREAS, The last original Buffalo Sabres employee, Rip Simonick's far reaching impact will continue to be felt both on and off the ice in Buffalo and throughout the NHL for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, A true gentleman, wise counselor and hard worker, the

contributions of Rip Simonick to the sport of hockey, and his commitment to building men of character as well as winning teams, is a model of integrity and commitment that will long stand preeminent in any sport, at any level; his personal and professional stature as a professional equipment manager is unparalleled and his accomplishments and contributions to professional hockey and the NHL are achievements worthy of the recognition of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Robert "Rip" Simonick for working over 3,500 NHL games and for 46 years of distinguished service to the Buffalo Sabres; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Robert "Rip" Simonick.