

2019-J954

Senate Resolution No. 954

BY: Senator BIAGGI

MOURNING the death of Michele Q. Greco, renowned owner of Mike's Deli, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow that this Legislative Body, representing the people of the State of New York, is moved this day to pay tribute to an eminent man of indomitable dedication whose public service and accomplishments will forever stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, Michele Q. Greco, who was known to connoisseurs of Italian cuisine as "the Salami King" and "the Mayor of Arthur Avenue," died on March 20, 2019, at the age of 89; and

WHEREAS, The fifth child of Luigi and Luisa Felice Greco, Michele Quinto Greco was born on May 8, 1929, in Mendicino in the Calabria region in Southern Italy; and

WHEREAS, Michele Q. Greco and his 17-year-old twin brother, Joe, arrived in New York in 1947, each sporting a new suit and carrying 50 dollars; Mike went to work in a Bronx butcher shop, married the boss' daughter and, in the early 1950s, opened a delicatessen nearby in the Arthur Avenue Retail Market; and

WHEREAS, Michele Q. Greco started work at 6 a.m. seven days a week and made Mike's Deli a place of pilgrimage in the heart of the Bronx's Little Italy; and

WHEREAS, With his larger than life personality, Michele Q. Greco's deli became a true fixture in the community and earned a reputation for both quality and consistency; in 1988, cookbook author Marcella Hazan visited and pronounced the dried porcini and imported Parmesan cheese especially good values; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, his eggplant parmigiana was so well-prepared it beat the star's in an episode of the Food Network's "Throwdown with Bobby Flay"; and

WHEREAS, Through the years, even as Bronx's Little Italy was shrinking, Michele Q. Greco's reputation was spreading beyond it; he appeared in a Ronzoni commercial filmed on Arthur Avenue, and he had a cameo role in the 1993 film, "Six Degrees of Separation"; and

WHEREAS, Michele Q. Greco's story was also depicted in the off Broadway, Cable Ace Award winning play, Behind the Counter with Mussolini; and

WHEREAS, The proud owner of Mike's Deli for more than five decades, Michele Q. Greco was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including Merchant of the Year and Citations of Merit from Bronx Borough Presidents; and

WHEREAS, Michele Q. Greco was truly an outstanding personification of the honest, hardworking immigrant who embraced the American Dream; he is survived by his four children, David, Marco, Louisa and Anna, as well as five grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Michele Q. Greco 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 mourn the death of Michele Q. Greco, renowned owner of Mike's Deli, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Michele Q. Greco.