

2019-J2146

Senate Resolution No. 2146

BY: Senator LITTLE

MOURNING the death of The Honorable John DeLong Austin Jr. distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable John DeLong Austin Jr. of Queensbury, New York, died on June 17, 2019, at the age of 84; he was a Warren County lawyer and judge, author, historian and genealogist; and

WHEREAS, Judge John Austin Jr. served in Warren County Family Court, Surrogate's Court and County Court from 1984 to 2003; after stepping down from the bench, he was appointed Warren County Historian and served from the Fall of 2007 until July 2010, when he was named historian emeritus and

WHEREAS, Born in Cambridge, Washington County on May 31, 1935, he was the son of John DeLong and Mabel Cowles (Bascom) Austin; when his grandmother, Mabel (DeLong) (Austin) Chapman, died in 1944, his family then occupied the Glen Street residence that was later designated as the Chapman Historical Museum, and he was a pupil at the old Broad Street

School in Glens Falls; and

WHEREAS, The family later resided for many years on Ridge Road in Queensbury, and he attended the old one-room schoolhouse of Queensbury Common District No. 4; he was then educated at Jackson Heights School, Glens Falls Junior and Senior High Schools, graduating from the last with the class of 1953; and

WHEREAS, He later received degrees from Dartmouth College and Albany Law School and worked as a teaching assistant at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis; he also served as the editor of The Dartmouth, America's oldest college newspaper; and

WHEREAS, John D. Austin Jr. distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, Early employment was at the old Central Market on Cooper Street in Glens Falls; as a towboat deckhand on the Cumberland River in Tennessee; and as a firefighter with the U.S. Forest Service in Idaho; and

WHEREAS, He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1958, and served as an infantryman and rocket-launcher specialist in Germany; he later served with the New York National Guard; and

WHEREAS, Returning to Glens Falls, John D. Austin Jr. worked as a reporter and editorial director of The Glens Falls Times; while

attaining his law degree, he was editor of The Lake George Mirror and did radio news reports for station WWSC; and

WHEREAS, John D. Austin Jr. was admitted to the practice of law in 1969; at the same time, he was active in politics, serving as Town of Queensbury councilman, county supervisor and town supervisor, including duties of Warren County budget officer and Social Services chairman; and

WHEREAS, He was appointed later as law clerk for both county court and surrogate's court, then gave up private practice in 1980 to become a full-time law clerk in Supreme Court; in 1984, he was appointed to serve as Warren County family court judge and was thereafter elected to two successive terms, serving for 15 years; and

WHEREAS, In 1999, John D. Austin Jr. was appointed Warren County judge and surrogate and was thereafter elected to the position and served until his retirement in 2003; and

WHEREAS, John D. Austin Jr.'s commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, In October of 2002, he started the county's drug treatment court as an alternative to state prison; this valuable program has an 80 percent success rate; and

WHEREAS, John D. Austin Jr. worked as an officer and director of many local groups, including terms as president of the Warren County Bar Association, Southern Adirondack Library System, Crandall Public Library and the Glens Falls-Queensbury Historical Association; and

WHEREAS, He was a director of the Warren County Historical Association and was active for many years with the Extension Service Association and its 4-H program, including duties as chairman of the County Youth Fair; as a youth, he had been a member of the Mighty Men,

the first boys' 4-H Club in Warren County; and

WHEREAS, He also served on the board of Warren County Head Start and as treasurer and board member of the Chapman Historical Museum; and

WHEREAS, For more than 30 years, John D. Austin Jr. served as secretary-treasurer of the Stephen J. Potter Memorial Foundation, which makes charitable grants to local students and groups; he was a longtime member of both Mohican Grange and Glens Falls Lodge, 81, B.P.O. Elks; and

WHEREAS, John D. Austin Jr. married his soulmate, Marcia Kay Behan, on August 15, 1969, at the Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation, in Queensbury; and

WHEREAS, In 1970, John D. Austin Jr. was named a fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, a designation limited to 50 living individuals at any time; he had for many years served as that society's membership chairman; and

WHEREAS, John D. Austin Jr. was a longtime fan of the Adirondack Red Wings and its successor hockey teams; he enjoyed listening to country music at Rick and Carol's, participating in Red Cross blood drives,

collecting tapes of old radio programs from his youth, and answering family-history queries on local websites; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his wife who died on July 28, 1997, and his parents, John D. Austin Jr. was predeceased by two sons, James Behan Austin and Michael John Austin; a sister, Nancy Austin Wright; and a brother, James B. Austin; he is survived by two children, John Delong Austin III and Susan Behan Austin and her wife, Lorielle Mallue; one

grandson, Henry Fenno Austin-Mallue; and a brother, James B. Austin; as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, John D. Austin Jr. 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 The Honorable John DeLong Austin Jr. 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 The Honorable John DeLong Austin Jr.