

2021-J340

Senate Resolution No. 340

BY: Senator MANNION

CELEBRATING the life and legacy of Floyd Douglas
Little

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge those outstanding individuals who have gone before us, and who have distinguished themselves in their professional and personal lives through their unwavering passion, dedication and substantial contributions to their communities and this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to celebrate the life and legacy of Floyd Douglas Little who died on January 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Born on July 4, 1942, Floyd Douglas Little was an All-American athlete, passionate Syracuse University alumnus, successful business executive, mentor, philanthropist, friend, and family man; an iconic college and professional football player who was raised in New Haven, Connecticut, and became a phenomenon on the field; he attended Syracuse University to keep a promise he made to 1961 Heisman Trophy winner Ernie Davis, before Davis' untimely passing in 1963; the pair were with Syracuse's Hall of Fame coach Ben Schwartzwalder at dinner during a visit to New Haven; Floyd Little, who was also being recruited to Army and Notre Dame, told Davis he would sign with Syracuse, but he

didn't make it official until the day he learned of Davis' death a few months later; and

WHEREAS, In 1963, Floyd Little brought his skills to Syracuse University, where the 5'10" running back became the program's first and only three-time All-American running back and finished fifth in Heisman Trophy voting as both a junior and senior; and

WHEREAS, Floyd Little, in his first home game for Syracuse in Archbold Stadium, scored five touchdowns, helping Syracuse beat Kansas and All-American Gale Sayers in 1964; and

WHEREAS, During his three seasons for the Orange, Floyd Little rushed for 2,704 yards and scored 46 touchdowns; he was also a standout return man who led the nation in all-purpose yards (1,990) and punt return average (23.5) as a junior in 1965; and still holds the Syracuse career record with six punt returns for touchdowns; and

WHEREAS, The 1966 ECAC Player of the Year, Floyd Little played in the same Orange backfield as College and Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee Larry Csonka '68 and Tom Coughlin '68, the two-time Super Bowl champion head coach; and

WHEREAS, Floyd Little was selected by the Denver Broncos with the No. 6 pick in the 1967 AFL-NFL Draft; in nine seasons (1967-75) with the Broncos, he amassed more than 12,000 all-purpose yards and was a five-time Pro Bowl selection; furthermore, he ranked seventh on the NFL's career rushing list (6,323 yards) at the time of his retirement and was a charter member of the Broncos Ring of Fame in 1984; and

WHEREAS, Floyd Little was elected to the College Football Hall of

Fame in 1983 and the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2010; his induction into the Greater Syracuse Sports Hall of Fame in 2019 marked the 11th hall of fame to recognize him; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, three years after his final NFL game, Floyd Little was named the Walter Camp Man of the Year, an award that combines athletic success with working to benefit others, often through charities and non-profit organizations; and

WHEREAS, He earned the 1992 NCAA Silver Anniversary Award for his collegiate and professional accomplishments and his civic and charitable activities, the 2012 Walter Camp Football Foundation Distinguished American Award, and the 2014 Doak Walker Legends Award; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, Floyd Little returned to his alma mater to serve as special assistant to the director of athletics, a position he held until 2016; the impact he made in his role as an athletics department administrator is immeasurable as he provided guidance and advice to student-athletes from all sports; his work enabled him to influence a new generation of student-athletes to work hard and find success; and

WHEREAS, In 2016, Syracuse University awarded Floyd Little with an honorary doctorate in humane letters at the school's 162nd Commencement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor and remember the life and legacy of Floyd Douglas Little; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Floyd Douglas Little.