

## 2021-J402

Senate Resolution No. 402

BY: Senator HARCKHAM

MOURNING the death of Lawrence Otis Graham,  
prominent attorney, bestselling author and  
distinguished citizen

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who,  
through their selfless commitment and dedication, have served to better  
the quality of life in our community and have had a measurable positive  
impact on the lives of its residents; Lawrence O. Graham was one such  
individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this  
Legislative Body records the passing of Lawrence O. Graham, noting the  
significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence O. Graham of Chappaqua, New York, died on Friday,  
February 19, 2021, at the age of 59; and

WHEREAS, Born on December 25, 1961, Lawrence O. Graham was the son  
of Betty J. and Richard C. Graham; after graduating from White Plains  
High School, he earned his bachelor's degree from Princeton University  
and his juris doctor from Harvard Law School; and

WHEREAS, For many years, Lawrence O. Graham worked as a corporate  
and real estate attorney at the White Plains law firm Cuddy & Feder; in

this capacity, he represented banks in real estate financings and served real estate clients on residential and commercial projects; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his distinguished law career, Lawrence O. Graham was a best-selling author of 14 non-fiction books about politics, education, race and class in America, some of which include *Our Kind of People: Inside America's Black Upper Class*, a New York Times and national bestseller, which Fox Entertainment is currently developing into a television series; *The Senator and The Socialite: The Story of America's First Black Political Dynasty*; and his essay collection *Member of the Club*, which included the New York Magazine cover story recounting his work undercover as a black busboy at the Greenwich Country Club in the early 1990s; and

WHEREAS, A man of many interests and passions, Lawrence O. Graham was devoted to his community, serving as a board member of the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, the American Theatre Wing, the Eaglebrook School, and the Horace Mann School, Red Cross of Westchester, the Princeton Center for Leadership Training, the Jack & Jill Foundation, and the Westchester Holocaust Commission; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence O. Graham also served as chairman of the Westchester County Police Board, was a frequent political commentator on News 12 Westchester, and an active member of the men's organization Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, also known as The Boule; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence O. Graham is survived by his wife of 29 years, Pamela Thomas-Graham; two sons, Gordon and Harrison; one daughter, Lindsey; one brother, Richard Graham; his godmother, Mirian Hinds; and

many cousins, in-laws, nieces and nephews, as well as numerous friends and colleagues who will long cherish his memory; and

WHEREAS, A devoted husband and father, Lawrence O. Graham's name is synonymous with character, dignity, intellect, depth, and humor, qualities evident to his family and to all those who were fortunate enough to have known him; he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Lawrence Otis Graham, prominent attorney, bestselling author and distinguished citizen; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Lawrence Otis Graham.