

2021-J1663

Senate Resolution No. 1663

BY: Senator STEC

COMMENDING Sergeant Howard R. Belden posthumously upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this country's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace in peace- time, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Sergeant Howard R. Belden posthumously upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Senate Liberty Medal was established by Resolution and is awarded to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Howard R. Belden enlisted in the United States Army in 1948, and was deployed to the Korean War (1950) where he served in Headquarters Company, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division as a rifleman in the Security Platoon; and

WHEREAS, On December 1, 1950, while defending his position near Haggaru, North Korea during the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir, he was shot in the back by enemy forces (WIA) and placed in a truck for evacuation; and

WHEREAS, During this time, the convoy was ambushed by enemy forces and Sergeant Howard R. Belden was reported as Missing in Action (MIA); he was Presumed Dead on December 31, 1953; and

WHEREAS, The Battle of Chosin Reservoir was one of the bloodiest battles of the Korean War with the highest number of casualties occurring during this gruesome battle; and

WHEREAS, Through his exceptional fortitude and valiant fighting spirit on that fateful day, Sergeant Howard R. Belden upheld the highest traditions of the United States Army, gallantly giving his life for his country and serving as an inspiration to all; and

WHEREAS, In July of 2018, after a summit meeting between President Trump and Kim Jong Un, 55 boxes containing the remains of United States servicemen were turned over to the U.S. government and sent to Hawaii for DNA and other analysis; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Howard R. Belden's family was notified of his identification on October 14, 2021; and

WHEREAS, A resident of Town of Hague, New York, Sergeant Howard R. Belden will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors at a time to be announced; and

WHEREAS, For his courageous service during the Korean War, Sergeant Howard R. Belden was awarded the Purple Heart with one Oak Leaf Cluster,

the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Marksmanship Badge, Korean Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Korea Presidential Citation, Republic of Korea War Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, Army Presidential Unit Citation and the Army Good Conduct Medal; and

WHEREAS, Residents of this great State must never forget the courage with which these men and women served their country, and must recognize that no greater debt is owed than that owed to those who gave their lives for their beloved Nation and to those who continue to be missing in action; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, Sergeant Howard R. Belden demonstrated his love for his country and merits forevermore the highest respect of his State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Sergeant Howard R. Belden posthumously upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Sergeant Howard R. Belden.