

2021-J2547

Senate Resolution No. 2547

BY: Senator MAY

MOURNING the death of John J. Murray,
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 this
great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, John Joseph Murray of Syracuse, New York, died on Thursday,
February 24, 2022, at the age of 93; and

WHEREAS, Born in Yonkers, New York, on November 17, 1928, John J.
Murray was the only child of John and Alice Murray, who both emigrated
from the "old country" as teenagers; his maternal grandmother and his
cousin, Alice, shared his childhood home; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray married the love of his life, the former
Nancy Sullivan, in 1951, and together they raised eight children in
Syracuse, with many summers spent at Charleston Lake, Ontario; and

WHEREAS, He was known for his smile, love for his community and zest
for life; John's father, who had a 6th grade education, helped him with
spelling using Latin from his education with the Christian Brothers in
Ireland; John was a proud "Christian Brother boy" too, graduating from

Manhattan Prep and Manhattan College; and

WHEREAS, On his first day at the Prep, John J. Murray was exposed to Dorothy Day through her newspaper The Catholic Worker; he read it and was hooked; she exposed him to the impact of mercy on hopelessness and set him on a path of peace and justice; he felt he had three crucial mentors in his life: Dorothy Day, Father Charles Brady, and the best of his life, his wife, Nancy; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray joined the United States Army during the Korean War era, and volunteered for an Army counterintelligence post in Syracuse; and

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

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his military service, John J. Murray worked for General Electric; he resigned with Nancy's approval when GE sponsored a visit to Syracuse by Senator Joseph McCarthy; he then became the first full-time employee of the Syracuse University Research Corporation (SURC); and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray enjoyed SURC, but left to work for the Crusade for Opportunity, an early anti-poverty program in Syracuse; that led to his job as Executive Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, in Poughkeepsie, New York; and

WHEREAS, John and Nancy Murray missed the Syracuse community, so they moved back and John first became the Assistant Director and then the Director of the Regional Medical Program of Central New York; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray worked to improve health outcomes in a service area stretching from the St. Lawrence River to northern Pennsylvania; he was particularly proud of their pioneering work to provide at-home dialysis units to people in need; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray then moved on to the American Management Association and, eventually, his own company, Management Circle Consultants; in both of these businesses, he facilitated long term planning processes for clients as diverse as the Catholic Relief Services in Africa and a Pineapple Growers' Association in Hawaii; he believed every person in the organization mattered, and prided himself on including in his processes everyone from Housekeeping to CEO; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray worked into his late 70s, including significant pro bono work in the Syracuse area; he and Nancy gave time and energy to activism and community service; they were both involved in the Catholic Interracial Council in the early 1950s, and broader civil rights efforts; and

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

WHEREAS, John J. Murray joined Martin Luther King Jr. in the March on Washington in 1963; he was deeply involved with Housing Visions in Syracuse, helping to create affordable housing in healthy neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, He volunteered with the Road to Jericho and Jail Ministry to help re-integrate formerly incarcerated persons back into the community; he was also instrumental in United Way's Success by Six to give all kids a good start in life; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray loved Syracuse and worked constantly to make it better; he helped create community gardens and worked for years to create a system of safe bicycle trails around the city; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray was recently honored with the designation of a portion of Meadowbrook Drive as "John Murray Ave."; and

WHEREAS, He was one of the city's volunteer beekeepers, relocating stray colonies; and he participated in the Thursday Morning Roundtable (TMR) for more than 50 years, and was once named Volunteer of the Year; he saw TMR as the perfect venue to bring diverse people together to make Syracuse great; and

WHEREAS, As an Army veteran, John J. Murray stood for peace; he demonstrated against United States military actions for decades, including the use of drones operated from Hancock Airport; and

WHEREAS, John J. Murray's concern for peace and justice was nourished by the faith he and Nancy shared with the St. Andrews community for more than 40 years, followed by "St. Andrews Outside the Walls", St. Lucy's and All Saints; through these parishes, he supported

a health center in Nicaragua, refugees settling in Syracuse, and the St. Lucy's soup kitchen; and

WHEREAS, A man of significant energy, John J. Murray was a Senior Olympian swimmer for years and biked the hills of Syracuse into his 80s; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his beloved grandson, Max, his adored daughter-in-law, Ann-Marie (Martin), grandsons, Adam and Taylor who he didn't get the chance to know but would have loved, and his best friend,

Vince O'Neil, John J. Murray is survived by his wife of 70 years, Nancy; their eight children, Cathie (Mike), Martin, Eileen, Sean (Deb), Maureen, Meg (Ivan), Brendan and Clare (Mike); his grandchildren, Evan (Kristen), Neal (Hilary), Erin, Sheila (James), Caitlin (David), Connor, Shannon, Beth, Sha (David), Martin (Claudia), Sean (Fallon), Brian (Seunghye), Sarah and Elizabeth; and his great-grandchildren, Olivia, Aiden, Becca, Cody, Ryan, Eva and Cam; in addition, he is survived by a myriad of nieces, nephews and cousins on both the Sullivan and Murray sides who held him in deep affection, as well as wonderful friends he made during 70 years in Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, John J. Murray 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; 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 John J. Murray, and to express its deepest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of John J. Murray.