

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson 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, The courage and bravery of our military personnel since the United States Armed Forces commenced Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom, will ensure our continued role as a Nation which embodies the ideals of democracy, and as a defender of liberty for people throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson 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 a resolution in 2014 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, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson was born on February 7, 1975, in Albany, New York; his family moved to Kinderhook, New York, where he attended Ichabod Crane Central School; and

WHEREAS, In 1993, after graduating from Smithson Valley High School in Spring Branch, Texas, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson began serving his country as a member of the United States Army as an Infantryman; and

WHEREAS, Upon his completion of Initial Entry Training and Basic Airborne School, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson was assigned to Delta Company, 325th Infantry Battalion Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he served for three years as a Tow Gunner and Squad Leader; and

WHEREAS, In the fall of 1996, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson reclassified to an Aircraft Power Plant Repairer, and was then assigned to Delta Company, 82nd Aviation Battalion where he served as an aircraft power plant repairer and supervisor for 18 months; subsequently, he was assigned overseas to Katterbach, Germany, where he served two years as an aircraft power plant repairer and supervisor with Alpha Company, 601st Aviation Support Battalion; and

WHEREAS, In January of 2000, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson attended and graduated from the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School to become a Special Forces weapons sergeant; upon graduation, he was assigned to Bravo Company 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where he served as a junior and senior weapons sergeant, a Special Forces intelligence sergeant, and assistant operations sergeant; and

WHEREAS, While assigned to 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson deployed once to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom, and three times to Operation Iraqi Freedom; and

WHEREAS, In May of 2006, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson was assigned as a special operations team member with United States Army Special Operations Command (Airborne) in Fort Bragg, North Carolina; he performed this duty for five years, deploying four times to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and twice more to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades for his exceptional service, courage,

wisdom, and determination, some of which include: Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor Device, Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Joint Meritorious United Award, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Three Campaign Stars, Iraq Campaign Medal with Six Campaign Stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal with Bronze Arrowhead, and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; he was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, and the Defense Meritorious Service Medal; and

WHEREAS, Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson died on July 21, 2011, at the age of 36, during a United States and Afghan special operations mission in Afghanistan's Paktika province; he is survived by his wife, and their two sons, as well as his mother, Laura M. Lane, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, Today, three years after his death, the bravery and willingness of Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson to fight for the lives of his fellow human beings, continues to inspire, and is deserving of the highest honor by all defenders of freedom; 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, The freedoms and security we cherish as Americans come at a very high price for those serving in the military in times of conflict; it is fitting and proper that we who are the beneficiaries of those who risk their lives, leaving their families behind, express our appreciation and eternal gratitude for their sacrifices and courageous acts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson 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 Master Sergeant Benjamin A. Stevenson.

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