

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring John Richard Dunne upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Prisoners' Legal Services of New York's inaugural Champion of Justice Award on October 24, 2014

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to honor and recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of civil and human rights and have distinguished themselves in their dedication and commitment to their community, to New York State, and to their country; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to acknowledge the significant milestones achieved throughout the career of this outstanding leader whose achievements and advocacy have been instrumental in helping ensure that the civil rights of all individuals, including those incarcerated in New York State's prisons, are protected and enforced; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor John Richard Dunne upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Prisoners' Legal Services of New York's inaugural Champion of Justice Award at its Anniversary Celebration on Friday, October 24, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Prisoners' Legal Services of New York is naming the Champion of Justice Award in honor of John R. Dunne in recognition and appreciation of his significant contributions to the betterment of our criminal justice system and the treatment of indigent New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, The 'Champion of Justice' Award shall be the highest award Prisoners' Legal Services of New York bestows; and

WHEREAS, John R. Dunne is a New York attorney who currently serves as senior partner at the Albany law firm of Whiteman, Osterman and Hanna; he served as the Assistant United States Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division under President George H.W. Bush for four years from 1990-1994; he also served as a member of the New York Senate from the 6th District for 23 years from 1966 to 1989; and

WHEREAS, As a New York State Senator, John R. Dunne, as Chairman of the Senate Corrections Committee, was a major figure seeking to quell tensions during the 1971 Attica uprising during which he, together with others, including NEW YORK TIMES editor Tom Wicker and Assemblyman Arthur Eve, negotiated with the prisoners; and

WHEREAS, As an original sponsor of the Rockefeller drug laws, John R. Dunne subsequently argued for major changes in New York's drug laws which were ultimately enacted into law; and

WHEREAS, John R. Dunne has served on the Board of Directors of Prisoners' Legal Services of New York for over two decades and has worked to ensure the provision of high quality, effective legal representation and assistance to indigent prisoners to help them secure their civil and human rights and has advocated for more humane prisons and for a more humane criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, As a member of the Board of Directors of Prisoners' Legal Services of New York, John R. Dunne has, on several occasions, presented testimony at the Joint Legislative Budget Hearings on Public Protection conducted by the Assembly Ways and Means and the Senate Finance Committees in support of the work of Prisoners' Legal Services of New York as a vital and cost effective component of New York State's public protection efforts by helping to reduce tension in prisons and increasing the likelihood that prisoners will be able to successfully reintegrate into society when they are released; and

WHEREAS, John R. Dunne has been recognized several times for his contributions to the law in New York State, earning him the New York

State Bar Association's Gold Medal Award in 2006, among other awards;

and

WHEREAS, The New York Bar Foundation named its fund for legal services for indigent persons after John R. Dunne; and

WHEREAS, John R. Dunne, in 2004, was appointed by then Chief Judge Judith Kaye to serve on her Commission on the Future of Indigent Legal Services and so served from 2004--2006 during which time the Commission issued a report regarding the State's constitutional and statutory obligation to protect the rights of the indigent accused; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, John R. Dunne was appointed Chairman of a task force charged with reforming the State's probation system; and

WHEREAS, John R. Dunne also sits on the Board of Directors of the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services whose mission it is to monitor, study and make efforts to improve the quality of legal services provided to the indigent accused; and

WHEREAS, John R. Dunne graduated from Georgetown University in 1951 and earned his law degree from Yale Law School in 1954; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout his life have been his wife, Denise, and his four children and several grandchildren, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor John Richard Dunne upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Prisoners' Legal Services of New York's inaugural Champion of Justice Award on October 24, 2014; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Prisoners' Legal Services of New York to be presented to John R. Dunne at the 40th Anniversary Celebration of Prisoners' Legal Services to be held on October 24, 2014.