

Senate Resolution No. 217

BY: Senator FLANAGAN

HONORING Caleigh and James Anson upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize the caring concern and heroic acts of exemplary citizens who take prompt and appropriate action in emergency situations, and in doing so, help others to avert life-threatening danger; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Caleigh and James Anson upon the occasion of their designation as recipients 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, On Friday, November 11, 2016, a fire broke out in Centereach, New York, at the residence of a couple and their two young sons; the boys' grandfather, who was visiting, and two family dogs were also at home at the time of the blaze; and

WHEREAS, Attempting to save his two sons and their mother through the second floor window, the father climbed out onto the sloped roof of the garage; and

WHEREAS, At the house across the street, 12 year-old Caleigh Anson saw the blaze and immediately alerted her father, James Anson, an off-duty Seventh Precinct Officer; while she called 911, James grabbed his ladder, raced across the street and quickly propped it against the garage of the burning house; and

WHEREAS, By the time the Suffolk County police arrived on the scene, flames were whipping high and in various directions by strong winds; furthermore, debris and embers blew along the street, setting trees on fire; and

WHEREAS, The father, his face black with soot, struggled against the intense heat up on the roof; without hesitation or regard for his safety, James Anson climbed to the top of the ladder and, with the help of the police officers who were assisting from below, used a hand-to-hand operation to successfully bring all four family members to safety; and

WHEREAS, The family of four was taken to Stony Brook University Hospital for smoke inhalation and other non-life-threatening injuries; the grandfather and one dog also made it out safely but unfortunately, the other dog succumbed to the fire; and

WHEREAS, Praised for their brave actions, Caleigh and James Anson demonstrated their true character and genuine compassion for the welfare of others, personifying, by virtue of their actions, the collective concern of ordinary citizens across the community of the State of New York who voluntarily respond when others are in need; and

WHEREAS, Justly recognized as heros, Caleigh and James Anson richly merit the admiration of this Legislative Body and their community for their consummate courage and heroic actions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Caleigh and James Anson upon the occasion of their designation as recipients of a Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Caleigh and James Anson.