

BY: Senator RANZENHOFER

MOURNING the death of Joseph Richard Gerace,
astute businessman, meritorious veteran,
distinguished citizen and devoted member of his
community

WHEREAS, It is with feelings of deepest regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Joseph Richard Gerace, a preeminent citizen whose distinguished public service and caring commitment will long serve as standards to which others might aspire; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Gerace of Batavia, New York, died on Thursday, November 17, 2016, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Gerace will fondly be remembered as an advocate for the region and an inspiring visionary; he saw what could be, and when he saw what could be, he was determined to make it happen; and

WHEREAS, Born to the late Joseph A. and Sarah (Gazzetta) Gerace on March 15, 1936, Joseph Richard Gerace graduated from Batavia High School in 1955; after graduation, he proudly served his country as a member of the United States Army from 1957-1959; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Gerace distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, After his discharge, Joseph Richard Gerace operated several local businesses including the Trailways Diner and the Bob Harris Realty Company; he was also the long-time proprietor of Gerace's Hair Care Center for over 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his extensive barbershop and cosmetology career, Joseph Richard Gerace graciously gave haircuts to his clients at the local nursing home or their house; and

WHEREAS, The lifelong Batavian was a member of many organizations including Knights of Columbus Fr. Vincent Capadanno Assembly 0755, Msgr. Kirby Council No. 325, and the Batavia Rotary Club, where he amassed 33 years of perfect attendance, served on the Board of Directors and held the position of Sergeant-at-Arms; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to the betterment of his beloved community, Joseph Richard Gerace was a member of the Batavia Zoning Board for 12 years; and

WHEREAS, An enthusiastic sports fan, Joseph Richard Gerace was the coach of the local Babe Ruth, Little League and American Legion baseball teams and was a participant of the Batavia Muckdogs Board of Directors, where he was recognized on their Wall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, A faithful member of the Resurrection Parish, Joseph Richard Gerace's commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable endeavors; and

WHEREAS, An extremely kind and generous man, Joseph Richard Gerace donated his time and energies to the Genesee Cancer Assistance program where he served on the Board of Directors since its inception; in addition, he founded the Simply Beautiful Hair Service, was a member of the St. Nick's Social Club and the Batavia Youth Bureau and held the positions of both President and co-Chair of the Festival of Hope, Genesee Cancer Assistance Golf Tournament Committee; and

WHEREAS, A spirited and joyful member of his community, Joseph Richard Gerace will fondly be remembered by the residents of Batavia for the spectacular Christmas light extravaganza he displayed at his home each year; and

WHEREAS, An avid New York Yankees and Buffalo Bills fan, Joseph Richard Gerace proudly attended each Super Bowl the Bills appeared in and was on the Founders Wall at the New Era Stadium tunnel entrance, which recognized season ticket holders since the founding of the team in 1960; and

WHEREAS, For his fierce determination, engaging personality and leadership style, Joseph Richard Gerace was bestowed upon numerous awards and accolades including the 2008 Humanitarian Award by the United Memorial Medical Center Foundation and the Jerome Foundation, the 2006 Volunteer of the Year Award for the city of Batavia, the 1993 Geneseean of the Year Award, the Italian-American of the Year Award by the Batavia Downs and a similar award from the Paolo Busti Cultural Foundation, as well as the Batavia Lions Club Italian American Award; he was also a two-time recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow Award, which is Rotary's Club highest honor; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his brother, Louis Gerace; and sister, Sarah Bateman; Joseph Richard Gerace is survived by his wife of 56 years, Lois (Wagner) Gerace; two sons, Robert J. and John P. (Rhonda); one daughter, Karen A. (Scott); a brother, Alfred J. (Patricia); one sister, Theresa (late Joseph); and six grandchildren, Ashley, Chelsea (Josh), Justin, Kirsten, Lindsey and David Rowland; as well as several nieces, nephews and cousins; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Joseph Richard Gerace 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; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Joseph Richard Gerace, astute businessman, meritorious veteran, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Joseph Richard Gerace.