

BY: Senator LAVALLE

COMMENDING Ariana Demattei upon the occasion of her designation as the High School State Honoree in the 22nd Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to act, in accord with its long-standing traditions, honoring the youth of today, and the leaders of tomorrow, whose character and achievements exemplify the ideals and values cherished by this great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Ariana Demattei has distinguished herself as a young woman of superlative ability, establishing a high standard of community service, purposefulness of life, and sense of responsibility rarely achieved in youthful years; and

WHEREAS, The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, created in 1995 by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), are designed to emphasize the importance our Nation places on service to others, and to encourage all young Americans to contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, Ariana Demattei, an esteemed resident of Center Moriches, New York, and a junior at Westhampton Beach High School, has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service by receiving a 2017 Prudential Spirit of Community Award; and

WHEREAS, This prestigious award honors young volunteers across America who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to their communities; and

WHEREAS, Ariana Demattei received this auspicious award by raising significant funds to provide more than 1,000 new backpacks filled with school supplies for local elementary students through an organization she founded in 2012 called Backpacks for Fellow Students; and

WHEREAS, To fund this remarkable program, Ariana Demattei organized numerous fundraising events, including a polar bear plunge, races, movie nights, bake sales and an annual appeal; she publicizes these events by writing press releases, arranging media interviews and using social media; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Ariana Demattei has written numerous appeal letters, applies for grants, solicits sponsors, recruits volunteers, and orders supplies as well as packs and distributes the backpacks to students whose family incomes qualify them to receive free or reduced-priced lunches; and

WHEREAS, Ariana Demattei hopes that Backpacks for Fellow Students will create a level playing field in the classroom for students, no matter their socioeconomic status, and give every child the opportunity

for educational success; and

WHEREAS, The success of the State of New York, the strength of our communities, and the vitality of American society depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of young people like Ariana Demattei, who use their considerable talents and resources to serve others; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is moved to honor Ariana Demattei, commending her for her outstanding record of volunteer service and peer leadership, recognizing the value of her labors and the promise of her future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations, with praise and pride, to commend Ariana Demattei upon the occasion of her designation as the High School State Honoree in the 22nd Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program and to extend to her the best wishes of this Legislative Body for a future of purposeful success and well-being; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Ariana Demattei.