

BY: Senator HARCKHAM

COMMENDING Deputy Benjamin Levine 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, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor those distinguished officers and citizens who would devote themselves to public service, demonstrating great courage and diligence in providing for the care and welfare of the citizens of their communities and this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Within every community of the State of New York there are certain individuals who, by virtue of their commitment and dedication, command the respect and admiration of their community for their exemplary contributions and service on behalf of others; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Deputy Benjamin Levine 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 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 July 14, 2019, Deputy Benjamin Levine of the Putnam County Sheriff Department was on patrol in the Town of Philipstown, New York when he overheard radio traffic from the New York State Police, dispatching a Trooper to the Bear Mountain Bridge on a report of a possible emotionally disturbed individual threatening suicide; and

WHEREAS, The first law enforcement officer on the scene, Deputy Benjamin Levine observed the individual looking over the railing down to the Hudson River below; and

WHEREAS, Without hesitation, Deputy Benjamin Levine contacted the individual and began an empathetic dialogue with him, during which time the man was holding onto the outer railing of the bridge; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the exchange, Deputy Benjamin Levine continued to hold eye contact, speak softly and compassionately, and listen sympathetically for more than 25 minutes, providing reassurance and redirecting his focus from the bridge; and

WHEREAS, As other officers arrived, the man became more agitated, but Deputy Benjamin Levine's perseverance in talking him off the bridge never wavered; and

WHEREAS, After the arrival of a Peekskill ambulance on scene, Deputy

Benjamin Levine recognized an opportunistic moment in their conversation, and extended his hand to the distraught man and motioned towards the ambulance; and

WHEREAS, The individual then released himself from the railing, and took Deputy Benjamin Levine's hand; he was taken into custody and transported to Phelps Memorial Hospital for evaluation; and

WHEREAS, In the performance of his duties, this remarkable Deputy demonstrated his character as well as his compassion for the welfare of others; he is truly a tremendous asset to the Putnam County Sheriff Department; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those dedicated public servants who unselfishly devote their lives to the preservation of order and the protection of others are worthy and due full praise for their commitment and noble endeavors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Deputy Benjamin Levine 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 Deputy Benjamin Levine.