

BY: Senator FUNKE

COMMENDING Gary Mervis 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 pay tribute to those individuals within the Empire State who have made strong contributions to their communities and who inspire others through their model citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Gary Mervis has given not only of his time and energies but also of his competence, intelligence and leadership and consequently has been designated for special honor; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Gary Mervis 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, Growing up in a modest city neighborhood, Gary Mervis overcame much adversity, including a life altering car accident, to become a teacher and coach before moving on to work in state government; regardless of the circumstances he always challenged himself to excel; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, Gary Mervis lost his daughter Elizabeth "Teddy" Mervis to cancer at the age of 12; he was determined to turn this personal tragedy into something positive; and

WHEREAS, After witnessing other children who needed a measure of normal activity in their lives while undergoing treatment, this extraordinary man was instrumental in developing a summer camp for children with cancer; volunteers from across the community rallied behind his tenacious work ethic to build the facility, Camp Good Days, on Keuka Lake; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, Camp Good Days has expanded its free services to include weeks for children with sickle cell anemia, children who have experienced violence and women going through breast cancer, as well as a week for men with prostate cancer; additionally, during international week, children arrive from all over the world; and

WHEREAS, Truly devoting his life's work to bringing awareness to families fighting cancer, Gary Mervis has had an immeasurable impact on his community and has enriched the lives of countless children and

adults; and

WHEREAS, Gary Mervis has earned the respect of his peers through his steadfast and unwavering leadership, dedication and commitment to serving those with cancer and other life challenges; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive dedication shown by an individual for the benefit of others which Gary Mervis has displayed throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense 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 commend Gary Mervis 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 Gary Mervis.