

Assembly Resolution No. 350

BY: M. of A. Buttenschon

COMMENDING Chief Russell E. Brooks II upon the occasion of his retirement after 43 years of service to the Utica Fire Department

WHEREAS, Citizens across our State and Nation are inspired by and indebted to our noble firefighters who exhibit courage and bravery every day in the course of their duties; and

WHEREAS, Firefighters exemplify the power of human compassion and the strength of the American spirit through actions of the most heroic magnitude; their sacrifices and their selfless dedication merit tribute and recognition by all citizens of this great country; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Chief Russell E. Brooks II upon the occasion of his retirement after 43 years of dedicated service to the Utica Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, A lifelong resident of Utica, New York, Russell E. Brooks II grew up in West Utica as one of seven children; and

WHEREAS, Russell E. Brooks II proudly served his country as a member of the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his military service, Russell E. Brooks II returned to his hometown and began his long and distinguished career with the Utica Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his illustrious tenure which traversed more than four decades, Russell E. Brooks II held every rank within the department, including Chief, the esteemed position from which he officially retired on September 28, 2018, after 14 years of devoted service; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of this brave firefighter's heroic actions in the rescue of an individual trapped in a fire, February 28, 1979, was proclaimed Russell E. Brooks Day in the City of Utica; and

WHEREAS, During the aftermath of the terrorist act of 9/11, Russell E. Brooks II and 11 of his fellow firefighters responded to Ground Zero to assist the FDNY with search and rescue operations; this brave act was featured in the book, **Twelve Valiant Men: Utica Firefighters at Ground Zero**; and

WHEREAS, With a steadfast and unwavering commitment to his community, Russell E. Brooks II served as Board President of The Utica Food Pantry, Building Committee President for the Irish Cultural Center and Vice President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians; he also served on the Board of Directors of the Veteran's Outreach Center; and

WHEREAS, In addition, he volunteers and serves on the Board of

Directors of the Great American Irish Festival; and

WHEREAS, Russell E. Brooks II was selected to carry the Olympic Torch as one of Utica's Home Town Heroes, as well as Grand Marshal for the City's 2013 St. Patrick's Day Parade; and

WHEREAS, Russell E. Brooks II has been the proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades, some of which include being named Man of the Year by St. Peter's School and as Firefighter of the Year by American Legion Post No. 229; he was also recognized by the Cornhill Senior Center for his tireless support, and received the Living Legend Award from the Boys & Girls Club of the Mohawk Valley; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his wife, Marianne, and his four sons, Patrick, Michael, John and Matthew, who have all shown him love and support and rejoice in his many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Firefighters unwaveringly serve our great State with pride, valor, and integrity; they are often the first to respond to an emergency, whether the emergency is a fire, transportation accident, natural disaster, act of terrorism, medical crisis, or spill of hazardous materials; and

WHEREAS, It takes a special dedication, a strong desire to help others and a tireless sense of community to forsake precious time with family and friends to respond to the signal that a neighbor is in need; Russell E. Brooks II is such a firefighter; throughout 43 years of devoted service, this firefighter has heroically performed, above and beyond the call of duty, those responsibilities which define the task of fire protection; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Chief Russell E. Brooks II upon the occasion of his retirement after 43 years of distinguished service to the Utica Fire Department; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Chief Russell E. Brooks II.