

BY: Senator KENNEDY

COMMENDING Mercy Flight upon the occasion of safely completing its 30,000th air ambulance patient mission

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those organizations within the State of New York which provide vital emergency medical rescue services; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Mercy Flight upon the occasion of safely completing its 30,000th air ambulance patient mission; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, Mercy Flight has been independent of any hospital, delivering patients to the facility which will best suit their medical needs by working closely with the regional network of hospitals, ground EMS, law enforcement, and fire authorities; and

WHEREAS, In 1981, Douglas H. Baker, owner and operator of LaSalle Ambulance, had a vision to assist more patients in need; later, he joined forces with Sister Sheila Marie Walsh, Dr. Matthew Burke and Dr. James Ehinger to provide air medical services to the communities of Western New York; and

WHEREAS, Established as the pioneer air-medical service in New York State and one of the first operations like it in the United States, Mercy Flight began operations from one base in Buffalo, 12 hours a day, utilizing one leased 206B Jet Ranger helicopter (N902EH) staffed by two pilots and three LaSalle Ambulance Paramedics; and

WHEREAS, Through the next few decades, this trail blazing nonprofit provider of emergency and non-emergency air and ground medical transport increased its fleet with many new jets and helicopters and expanded its services; and

WHEREAS, In 2008, Mercy Flight moved into its first permanent home at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, and on September 1, 2009, Mercy EMS was formed to provide ambulance service to the residents of Genesee County and United Memorial Medical Center; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, Mercy Flight instituted a Night Vision Goggle program and in 2014, Mercy Flight WNY, Mercy Flight Central, and Starflight formed the FLIGHTS coalition aimed at advocating community-based air medical transportation by pooling their resources and educating the public and first responders about the service itself and its value to the community; and

WHEREAS, In September of 2015, Mercy EMS began operations in the Village of Springville and Town of Concord and for Bertrand Chaffee hospital under temporary operating authority in response to an emergency

need determined by the Town, Village and hospital, increasing the availability of dedicated resources to virtually 100%; and

WHEREAS, On January 7, 2016, Mercy EMS was selected as the contracted primary provider of ambulance service for the Village of Springville with additional coverage to the Town of Concord, and later that year, began operations in the Town of Niagara under temporary operating authority in response to an emergency need determined by the Town, once again, increasing the availability of dedicated resources to virtually 100%; and

WHEREAS, Today, Mercy Flight remains one of the last few not-for-profit providers of air and ground medical transport services; in December of 2021, the organization celebrated its 30,000th patient transport and continues to stay true to its mission from several bases with numerous professional medical providers, pilots, aircraft mechanics, communications specialists, administrative staff and management personnel that provide the necessary support for its operations; and

WHEREAS, All of the individuals involved with Mercy Flight, past and present, are deserving of the highest commendation for their contributions to the noble missions of this life-saving organization; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Mercy Flight upon the occasion of safely completing its 30,000th air ambulance patient mission; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Mercy Flight.