

BY: Senator JORDAN

COMMENDING Corporal Richard K. Gillingham posthumously 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, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this country's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace in peacetime, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Corporal Richard K. Gillingham posthumously 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, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham proudly served his country as a member of the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War from 1964 until May 19, 1967, when he gave the ultimate sacrifice, succumbing to wounds sustained in action; and

WHEREAS, A resident of Valatie, New York, at the time of his death Corporal Richard K. Gillingham was participating in Operation Hickory, a search and destroy mission which took place in the vicinity of Gia Binh, three kilometers northeast of Con Thien (Hill 158) in Quang Tri Province; and

WHEREAS, On May 19, 1967, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham was serving as a Squad Leader with Company H, Second Battalion, Ninth Marines, Third Marine Division (Reinforced) Fleet Marine Force when his squad was subjected to heavy small arms fire and automatic weapons fire; and

WHEREAS, In the initial burst of fire, one of his men was seriously wounded and unable to move from his exposed position; with complete disregard for his own safety, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham rushed into the open terrain to administer aid to the fallen Marine who was approximately 20 meters away; and

WHEREAS, Although wounded three times, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham courageously persisted in his efforts until he had moved his fellow Marine to a secure position; and

WHEREAS, While heroically attempting to return to his squad, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham succumbed to his grievous wounds; and

WHEREAS, Through his exceptional fortitude and valiant fighting spirit, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham upheld the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service, gallantly giving his life for his country and serving as an inspiration to all; and

WHEREAS, For his courageous service during the Vietnam War, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham was awarded the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart; and

WHEREAS, Residents of this great State must never forget the courage with which these men and women served their country, and must recognize that no greater debt is owed than that owed to those who gave their lives for their beloved Nation and to those who continue to be missing in action; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, Corporal Richard K. Gillingham demonstrated his love for his country and merits forevermore the highest respect of his State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Corporal Richard K. Gillingham posthumously 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 the family of Corporal Richard K. Gillingham.