

Senate Resolution No. 539

BY: Senator BROOKS

MOURNING the death of Ernest Kight Jr., beloved educator, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Ernest Kight Jr. of Freeport, New York, died on Saturday, February 27, 2021, at the age of 68; and

WHEREAS, In 1971, Ernest Kight Jr. graduated from Freeport High School and, immediately after earning his bachelor's degree in political science from Stonehill College, in Massachusetts, he returned to Freeport High as a social studies teacher, his dream job; and

WHEREAS, He was not only a dedicated teacher, but also an inspirational coach as he helped mold the girls' basketball team into a powerhouse, claiming the Nassau County championship for four consecutive years from 1989-1992; and

WHEREAS, For his dedication and commitment to the Red Devils, Coach Ernest Kight Jr. was inducted into the Nassau County High School Athletics 2019 Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, In 1991, Ernest Kight Jr. was promoted to Assistant Principal of Freeport High School before being named Principal in 2009; and

WHEREAS, This extraordinary educational leader retired in 2012, after 32 years of outstanding service to the district, but, again, he was not gone for long as he returned in 2015, to serve on the Board of Education; four years later, he became President of the board; and

WHEREAS, His knowledge of education and school functioning made him an excellent board member and President; while remaining fiscally responsible, he thoughtfully weighed the needs of the students and their families; and

WHEREAS, Ernest Kight Jr., who was very proud of his Freeport community, actively supported both the academic programs and the extracurricular programs, and was very involved in advocacy matters with policymakers; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his esteemed career, Ernest Kight Jr. was devoted to helping others succeed; he provided a tremendous service to the future of our State and Nation, inspiring generations of young people in their educational journeys and ensuring their success in their future years; and

WHEREAS, Ernest Kight Jr.'s commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, During the pandemic, Ernest Kight Jr. worked to support students and staff by helping secure PPE and urging all to stay informed on how to combat the spread of Covid-19; and

WHEREAS, He also worked with Northwell Health and the Memorial Presbyterian Church, in Roosevelt, New York; he received the Moderna vaccine live on camera in an effort to encourage others to get vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, Ernest Kight Jr. is survived by his loving wife, Diane Mary Caruso; and his proud father, Ernest Kight Sr.; as well as his three caring siblings, Vanessa Kight, Angelyn Kight and Christopher Kight; he will be truly missed by many; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Ernest Kight Jr. leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Ernest Kight Jr., and to express its deepest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Ernest Kight Jr.