

Senate Resolution No. 561

BY: Senator MAYER

MOURNING the death of Murray Wittner, MD, PhD, renowned pathologist, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who, through their selfless commitment and dedication, have served to better the quality of life in our community and have had a measurable positive impact on the lives of its residents; Dr. Murray Wittner was one such individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Dr. Murray Wittner, noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Born on April 23, 1927 in New York City, Dr. Murray Wittner died on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at the age of 93; and

WHEREAS, Interested in science from an early age, "Wit" as he was affectionately known at Far Rockaway High School, was a member of the Biology and Chemistry Clubs, as well as various service organizations; after graduation, he attended the University of Illinois, Urban-Champaign, where he received both his Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Master of Science (zoology) degrees; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his studies, Murray Wittner enlisted in the United States Air Force and proudly served his country during the Korean War from 1951 to 1953, advancing to the esteemed rank of First Lieutenant; and

WHEREAS, Stationed in Tokyo, Murray Wittner served as consultant parasitologist to the Air Force Surgeon of the Far East Air Force; after the war, he returned to Harvard University, settling in Watertown, Massachusetts, with his bride and completing his doctorate in 1955; and

WHEREAS, Following the advice of his lifelong best friend, the late Arthur Gillman, Murray Wittner went on to attend Yale University School of Medicine, graduating in 1961; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murray Wittner and his wife, the former Phyllis Gillman, moved from West Haven, Connecticut, to Mamaroneck, New York, in 1962, and then moved to their present home in Larchmont, New York, in 1964; and

WHEREAS, Murray met Phyllis, his best friend Arthur's younger sister, when they were children; it was only after Murray returned from the Air Force, however, that he noticed her; the two would go for long drives so Murray could practice driving to get his driver's license; it was perhaps at this time that he also began his lifetime romance with cars, especially sports cars, a passion he held throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murray Wittner's illustrious career as a pathologist and specialist in parasitology spanned more than 50 years at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) in the Bronx, New York; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his extraordinary tenure at AECOM, Dr. Murray Wittner ran a research laboratory where he mentored dozens of young doctors and scientists, taught parasitology at the medical school, and regularly saw patients at the hospital and later at his travel medicine clinic; he was Professor Emeritus at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine; and

WHEREAS, An audiophile and avid photographer, Dr. Murray Wittner also had a passion for classical music, hi fidelity stereo equipment, symphony orchestra and the opera; he and Phyllis regularly attended the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera, and the New York City Ballet; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murray Wittner and his close friend, the late Nicholas Delagi, spent many evenings listening to, critiquing, and enjoying music played on the latest stereo equipment; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, a shutterbug, Dr. Murray Wittner was a regular at the Bronx Zoo and New York Botanical Garden, where he and a small group of devotees, "the camera club," would gather on Saturday mornings; and

WHEREAS, For much of his life, Dr. Murray Wittner was always ready with a camera; he was best known as a nature photographer, especially animals and landscapes, but also excelled in closeup work of flowers and insects; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, he was equally comfortable on both sides of the film and would descend into his color darkroom for hours on end developing and printing his pictures; he and Phyllis worked together mounting and framing Murray's work, many of which adorn their home; and

WHEREAS, While he was passionate about many things, above all his greatest passion was being a father to his two children, a grandfather to his two grandsons, and a husband to his wife of nearly 66 years, Phyllis; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his wife, Dr. Murray Wittner is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Lisa Wittner and Jack Schwartz; son and daughter-in-law, David and Hsin Hsin Wittner; and two grandsons, Michael and Hunter Wittner; as well as a niece, Sarah Gillman; and nephew, Theodore Gillman; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murray Wittner's infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through his family's vivid and happy memories; his insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope to the countless lives he touched; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Dr. Murray Wittner leaves behind a legacy which will long

endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing man; he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Murray Wittner, MD, PhD, 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 Murray Wittner, MD, PhD.