

BY: Senator PALUMBO

CONGRATULATING World War II veteran John Harrison of Laurel, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating his 100th Birthday, on April 29, 2021

WHEREAS, Senior citizens bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the increasingly active roles they play in today's society; their past contributions and future participation are a vital part of, and valuable asset to, the fabric of community life and activity; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to commemorate and recognize certain milestones celebrated by citizens of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate World War II veteran John Harrison of Laurel, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating his 100th Birthday; and

WHEREAS, John Harrison was born in Brooklyn, New York, on April 29, 1921; his father was Irish born and worked as a trolley conductor and bus driver in Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, Young John Harrison was part of the first generation of his family to be born in Brooklyn; he attended Bushwick High School and later Pace University; since he was adept at foreign languages, he dreamed of working as a linguist; and

WHEREAS, Worrying about his "dumb Irish luck," he enlisted in the United States Navy, knowing, if he didn't, he would have been drafted into the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, John Harrison served in New York City, Connecticut and other places before being shipped to San Diego and from there across the Pacific in a large convoy to engage the enemy; fighting was still underway on Iwo Jima when his ship arrived; he believes he was off the island for seven or eight months; and

WHEREAS, Out of all the chapters in John Harrison's long life, the most dramatic ones were the two months he spent on that U. S. Navy vessel during the battle over the island of Iwo Jima in February and March of 1945, and the subsequent air attacks on the Japanese mainland by American planes; his ship's mission was to rescue downed American pilots who left the island each day to bomb targets in Japan; and

WHEREAS, John Harrison recalls being on the ship one morning when a fellow sailor called out "Hey, did you hear the war is over? We dropped a big bomb on Japan."; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, John Harrison demonstrated his love for his country and merits

forevermore, the highest respect of his State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, By early December of 1945, John Harrison was safely back in Brooklyn with his beautiful wife, Marion, whom he had married in 1943; and

WHEREAS, After his noble service to his country, John Harrison became an accountant in a New York City advertising agency; in total, he spent 35 years in advertising before retiring in the mid-1980s; he and his wife had purchased a home in Laurel, New York, in the late 1950s, the home he still resides in today; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his wife of 78 years, the late Marion, with him throughout have been his two sons, John (Barbara) and Daniel (Allison), as well as his two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, With his zest for life, this extraordinary centenarian has inspired and enhanced the lives of his family and friends, and has experienced the incredible joys and sorrows characteristic of and reserved for those with the stamina and courage to savor a full life; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize those who have reached such a remarkable age and who have witnessed and celebrated the innovations, cultural developments and awesome achievements of this country during the last century, while themselves contributing to the growth and excellence of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate World War II veteran John Harrison of Laurel, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating his 100th Birthday; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to John Harrison.