

Senate Resolution No. 1471

BY: Senator GRIFFO

CONGRATULATING William J. Falk of Clinton, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating his 100th Birthday on August 20, 2023

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, 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, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate William J. Falk upon the occasion of his 100th Birthday which was celebrated at Twin Ponds Country Club in New York Mills, New York; and

WHEREAS, William J. Falk, one of four sons, was born on August 20, 1923, to parents, Norbert and Margaret, in Utica, New York; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, William J. "Bill" Falk served in the United States Army Signal Corps, 593rd Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion, in the European Theater of Operations (ETO); the Signal Aircraft Warning (SAW) Battalions were among the first in the United States Army to use RADAR in the war, providing tactical support to air command units that directed the Allies' fighters to their targets and bolstering front-line infantry; and

WHEREAS, The 593rd Battalion landed in Naples, Italy, in March 1944, providing support for the post-Anzio-related operations as well as the Rome-Arno Campaign with the United States Fifth Army; later reassigned to the Seventh Army/VI (Sixth) Army Corps, William J. Falk, along with the battalion, landed on the beaches of France, marched across the country in November 1944, as part of the Allied countries' forces that resisted the German Ardennes Offensive, and later recaptured Strasbourg, France; and

WHEREAS, William J. Falk's brothers also fought for the freedom of the world; the eldest, Sam, served in the United States Army in Alaska; Howard joined the Navy, serving in the Pacific fleet; Jack, the youngest, served in General George S. Patton's 89th Division; fortunately, all four siblings returned home; and

WHEREAS, With Germany's surrender in May 1945, William J. Falk remained in Europe, preparing for his assignment to the Pacific; after almost three years in the European Theater, he finally returned home due to the surrender of Japan; and

WHEREAS, On September 6, 1947, William J. Falk married Lucille; the couple were blessed with two daughters, Janice Pezdek and Martha Devine, both of Clinton, New York; and three sons, Peter of Massachusetts, Stephen of Brownville, New York, and Eric of California; and

WHEREAS, William J. Falk was predeceased by Lucille on September 4, 2015; and

WHEREAS, With his zest for life, William J. Falk has inspired and enriched the lives of his family and friends through the profound charm and wisdom which come only from a fullness of years; this exceptional centenarian 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, More than 70 members of his family gathered for a surprise celebration of William J. Falk and his 100 years as an inspiration to all who know and love him; after a nine-hole round of golf, he was met by bagpiper, Jack Heins, of Syracuse; serenade singers; and Diane Zdan, of Honor Flight Syracuse, who presented the World War II veteran with a certificate of honor from Congress as well as a flag that flew over the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, As Americans, we honor William J. Falk, as well as all the individuals who sacrificially served our country, preserving its freedom, given to us by our founding fathers, and the hope that future generations will remember that gift provided by those who gave everything; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent 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 William J. Falk upon the occasion of celebrating his 100th Birthday on August 20, 2023; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to William J. Falk.