

Senate Resolution No. 176

BY: Senator BRESLIN

COMMENDING Sergeant Kenneth Wells 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 Sergeant Kenneth Wells 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, For his courageous service during the Vietnam War, Sergeant Kenneth Wells was awarded two Purple Heart Medals along with numerous federal and New York State Medals; he is currently enrolled in the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor located in New Windsor, New York; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Kenneth Wells, a lifelong resident of Feura Bush, New York, enlisted in the United States Marine Corps after his graduation from Bethlehem Central School District in 1965; and

WHEREAS, After completing basic training he was deployed to the Vietnam War in 1967 where he valiantly engaged in fierce fighting with the enemy in the military operation named Operation Swift; a selfless warrior and elite Marine, Sergeant Kenneth Wells was wounded while engaging enemy forces in a firefight to rescue two Marine Units surrounded by the enemy, receiving multiple shrapnel wounds in his knees during the course of his heroics; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Kenneth Wells recovered from his sustained injuries at a military hospital in Quang Nam Province; eager to rejoin the comrades of his unit, he was re-deployed and again engaged with enemy forces in a military operation known as Operation Auburn; and

WHEREAS, It was during this search and destroy mission against enemy forces that Sergeant Kenneth Wells was again wounded in action, bravely putting his life on the line while engaged with the enemy and receiving shrapnel wounds in his back from a mortar explosion; it was for these actions that Sergeant Kenneth Wells received his multiple Purple Heart Medals; and

WHEREAS, After a celebrated return home, Sergeant Kenneth Wells went on to receive an Associate's degree from Schenectady Community College; he later attended San Mateo and San Bruno Colleges in California; and

WHEREAS, Active in his community, Sergeant Kenneth Wells could not forgo his oath to serve; his dedication to others is exemplified in his impassioned work as a counselor at Dominion House; while also working in construction trades, he continued on to coach Little League Baseball, becoming an umpire while also serving as a YMCA lifeguard before he retired; and

WHEREAS, A current resident of Feura Bush, New York, Sergeant Kenneth Wells' heroics were again acknowledged on November 4, 2022 as he was the Reverend Francis A. Kelley Society Albany County Hometown Hero and received a Senate Proclamation in recognition of his exemplary military community service; in 2021 he was one of three nominees for the New York State Veterans Hall of Fame Award from Albany County; 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 risked their lives for their beloved Nation; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, Sergeant Kenneth Wells 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 Sergeant Kenneth Wells 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 Sergeant Kenneth Wells.