

Senate Resolution No. 2333

BY: Senator ROLISON

COMMENDING Trooper Andrew M. Giga upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Superintendent's Commendation Award on May 16, 2024

WHEREAS, Law enforcement officers from the State of New York put their lives on the line every day for the citizens of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, The quality and sanctity of community life are cherished values, worthy of safeguarding, and this Legislative Body is moved to honor those individuals who serve to preserve and protect such values, lauding particularly their unwavering courage and dedication in the daily performance of their duties; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Trooper Andrew M. Giga upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Superintendent's Commendation Award to be celebrated at the New York State Police 48th Annual Superintendent's Commendation and Awards Day Ceremony at the State Police Academy in Albany, New York, on Thursday, May 16, 2024; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor those distinguished officers who would devote themselves to public service, demonstrating great courage and diligence in providing for the care and welfare of the citizens of their communities and this great Empire State; it is appropriate to recognize and commend outstanding law enforcement officers, such as Andrew M. Giga, for their valued contributions to the community; and

WHEREAS, Andrew M. Giga, of Montgomery, New York, has been a member of the New York State Police, Troop F, Community Stabilization Unit, in Middletown, New York, since March 28, 2016; and

WHEREAS, On July 9, 2023, the Middletown area was hit by a sudden torrential downpour of rain; a storm system hovered over parts of Orange, Rockland, and Westchester Counties, delivering historic rainfall; in only three hours, approximately nine inches of rain had fallen on the ground that was already saturated from previous precipitation; and

WHEREAS, Flash flooding occurred in multiple areas, washing away houses and stranding motorists; the 9-1-1 centers in Orange and Rockland Counties were inundated with calls from distressed and panic-stricken victims who were trapped in their vehicles after parts of the roadway were washed away; some individuals were fortunate enough to abandon their vehicles before the water swept them into the nearby forest; and

WHEREAS, Troopers Andrew M. Giga and Jason R. Cole, both Troop F K9 members, responded to the dispatched calls; fire departments and EMS

teams also arrived on the scene; with a deluge still adding to the floodwaters, the officers observed approximately 20 vehicles and the victims, ranging from children to the elderly, in the water on the roadway, now reaching a height of approximately three feet; and

WHEREAS, Fastening multiple long dog leashes and rope together, Andrew M. Giga constructed a rescue line which was approximately 100 feet long; tying it to the back of Trooper Cole's police pickup truck and walking through the water to fasten it to the guiderail on the roadway, he provided a lifeline for the stranded victims; and

WHEREAS, Gathering small groups, the two officers reassured and guided the 25 motorists to safety shortly before additional sections of the road collapsed, allowing several vehicles to be swept into the tree line; both troopers remained with the traumatized individuals while EMS personnel evaluated them and executed a plan of transport and care; and

WHEREAS, Despite the crisis and threat to human life, both troopers remained calm while making several radio transmissions; Trooper Andrew M. Giga had typed only three sentences on his incident report, never seeking praise or acknowledgement for his actions that day; and

WHEREAS, Supervisors of Troop F Zone 2 and the media learned of the courage and professionalism of these two outstanding officers, leading to the dissemination of the story through numerous news agencies and interviews; upholding the finest traditions and standards of the New York State Police, they should be commended for their bravery, professionalism, and humility; and

WHEREAS, Within every community of the State of New York, there are certain individuals who, by virtue of their commitment and dedication, command the respect and admiration of their community for their exemplary contributions and service on behalf of others; Andrew M. Giga should be embraced with admiration and respect by a grateful citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those dedicated public servants who unselfishly devote their lives to the preservation of order and the protection of others are worthy and due full praise for their commitment and noble endeavors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Trooper Andrew M. Giga upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Superintendent's Commendation Award; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Trooper Andrew M. Giga.