

BY: Senator MARTINS

COMMENDING Great Neck North High School upon the occasion of hosting its 2nd Annual Memorial Day event and paying tribute to this year's honoree on May 25, 2023

WHEREAS, Members of the United States Armed Forces, who served so faithfully and courageously in wars in which our Nation's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace during peacetime, deserve the highest commendation of this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to applaud the organizations who honor those who have served in times of active conflict, as well as those who have served in times of peace; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Great Neck North High School upon the occasion of hosting its 2nd Annual Memorial Day event and to pay tribute to this year's honoree on Thursday, May 25, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Lee Ielpi proudly served his country as a Recon Specialist in the United States Army during the Vietnam War, where he was actively involved in over 25 combat operations; for his brave service, he was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge, Bronze Star for valor, Arcom Medal for valor with two Oak Leaf Clusters, and an Air Medal; and

WHEREAS, In 1963, Lee Ielpi joined the Great Neck Vigilant Volunteer Fire Department and quickly rose through the ranks to hold the title of Chief, and later, a trustee; for his many life-saving efforts, he received Nassau Counties' second highest award; and

WHEREAS, In 1970, Lee Ielpi started his career with the New York City Fire Department, from which he retired in 1996; he served in an engine company in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn for seven years before joining Rescue 2 Special Operations Unit where he worked for 19 years; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his many years with both departments, Lee Ielpi trained in a variety of specialty courses and was the recipient of 24 service ribbons for his steadfast and unrelenting commitment to his profession and communities; and

WHEREAS, On the morning of the terrorist attacks in New York City on September 11, 2001, Lee Ielpi arrived at the World Trade Center within a half hour of the second building collapse and immediately began assisting with organization operations; for nine months, he returned to the site daily to help in any way he could and served as a liaison between the victims' families and recovery operations and rebuilding; and

WHEREAS, During search and rescue efforts, Lee Ielpi emotionally and

reverently carried out the body of his beloved son who followed in the footsteps of his father as a vital and courageous member of New York City Fire Department Squad 288; and

WHEREAS, In memory of his son and all the innocent people who perished, Lee Ielpi co-founded the 9/11 Tribute Museum and since 2002, has served as the President of the September Eleventh Families Association Board of Directors; in this capacity, he served as a voice for those lost and has spoken at various events about the value of charitable service and anti-terrorism efforts; 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 gave their lives for their beloved Nation and to those who continue to be missing in action; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited their patriotism both at home and abroad, these men and women demonstrated their love for their country and merit forevermore, the highest respect of their 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 Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Great Neck North High School upon the occasion of hosting its 2nd Annual Memorial Day event and to pay tribute to this year's honoree on May 25, 2023; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Great Neck North High School and Lee Ielpi.