Senate Resolution No. 1264

BY: Senator ROLISON

COMMENDING Donald Herring, Sr. posthumously, 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 esteemed Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Donald Herring, Sr. posthumously, 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, On March 21, 1955, Donald Herring, Sr. was born in Poughkeepsie, New York; at 17 years of age, driven by a sense of duty and adventure, he entered the United States Navy in April 1972; and

WHEREAS, Serving under the VF-31 Fighter Squadron, famously known as the "Tomcatters," Donald Herring, Sr. was stationed at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach, Virginia; as a 632 Ordnance Mechanic and E2 Airman Apprentice, his role was critical to the Squadron's operations during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, Though his official records place him with VF-31, Donald Herring, Sr. also spent time on the ground in Vietnam, enduring traumatic experiences that would shape the rest of his life; he was honorably discharged in June 1973, returning to Poughkeepsie with the invisible wounds of war and struggling with PTSD but determined to rebuild his life; and

WHEREAS, Back home, Donald Herring, Sr. became a beloved figure in his community; known for his generosity and mechanical genius, he was the go-to guy for anyone with car trouble; if something had an engine, he could fix it; and

WHEREAS, Donald Herring, Sr. had a gift for seeing the good in people and never hesitated to lend a hand; his warmth and reliability made him unforgettable to those who knew him; he was a devoted family man, married with four children and seventeen grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Donald Herring, Sr. cherished his family deeply, and his love extended to his five siblings, including a brother, who also served in the United States Navy, and a sister, Nancy, who served in the United

Staes Coast Guard; and

WHEREAS, Loving music, Donald Herring, Sr. especially enjoyed the "oldies" of the 1950s and 1960s which often filled the air while he worked in his garage; and

WHEREAS, Although Donald Herring, Sr. faced many hardships, he never let them define him; his resilience, kindness, and unwavering sense of duty left an indelible mark on everyone fortunate enough to cross his path; whether he was turning a wrench, sharing a laugh, or offering quiet wisdom, he lived with purpose and heart; and

WHEREAS, Donald Herring, Sr. passed away surrounded by the love of his family, leaving behind not only memories but also a legacy of service, compassion, and community; in the City of Poughkeepsie, his name still echoes in stories told over coffee, in the hum of engines he once repaired, and in the lives he touched with his generosity; and

WHEREAS, Donald Herring, Sr. was more than a United States Navy veteran; he was a hometown hero, a devoted father, and a man who made the world better simply by being in it; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism, both at home and abroad, Donald Herring, Sr. 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 Donald Herring, Sr. posthumously, 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 the family of Donald Herring, Sr.