

BY: Senator GALLIVAN

HONORING Ron Walkowiak upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award by the Clarence Chamber of Commerce on March 20, 2025

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those distinguished citizens who would devote their work and purpose to community service, contributing to the welfare of the citizens of their communities and this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Ron Walkowiak upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award by the Clarence Chamber of Commerce, to be celebrated at its 52nd Annual Awards Gala at Samuel's Grande Manor in Williamsville, New York, on Thursday, March 20, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Ron Walkowiak is receiving this prestigious award for his steadfast and unremitting commitment to his beloved community of Clarence, New York; and

WHEREAS, Ron Walkowiak was born in Buffalo, New York; after graduating from Kensington High School, he enrolled at the New York State Ranger School in Wanakena; however, upon graduation, he did not pursue a career in that field; instead, he enlisted in the United States Army and was sent to serve in Germany; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return home, Ron Walkowiak met the City Forester of Buffalo who asked him to join the Forestry Department, marking diseased elm trees for removal and supervising the street tree replacement program; and

WHEREAS, After getting married, Ron Walkowiak and his wife purchased a home outside Buffalo which disqualified him for a promotion in the Forestry Department; instead, the contractor who was planting the trees for Buffalo offered him a job as Sales Manager for his new wholesale nursery; and

WHEREAS, At that time, Ron Walkowiak was the father of four children; his acceptance of the position of Sales Manager led to a 24-year career during which he earned the position of President of the Western New York State Nurserymen Association and was honored as Man of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Venturing out on his own, Ron Walkowiak founded a wholesale nursery brokerage firm and relocated to Clarence, New York, working from his home office for 33 years until his retirement in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Active in his community, Ron Walkowiak has served on the Clarence Hollow Board and worked at the local Farmers Market; currently,

he is a member of the Arboretum Advisory Committee, Clarence Conservation Advisory Council, and Landscape & Tree Review Committee;

through these avenues, he has met the people whom he credits with making the Town of Clarence the wonderful place it is; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the well-being and vitality of their communities and have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Ron Walkowiak upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award by the Clarence Chamber of Commerce; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Ron Walkowiak.