Senate Resolution No. 591

BY: Senator WEBB

CELEBRATING the life and accomplishments of former New York State Assemblyman James R. Tallon, Jr., renowned public servant and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those individuals of outstanding purpose whose lives were committed to public service and the pursuit of excellence in the conduct of the legislative process in this noble Empire State; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of James R. Tallon, Jr., a Binghamton native who served as majority leader of the New York State Assembly; he was 82 years old; and

WHEREAS, James R. "Jim" Tallon, Jr. was born on October 21, 1941, in Brooklyn, New York, to James and Mary (Colbert) Tallon; his early years were marked by academic excellence, having graduated at the top of his class from North High School in Binghamton, New York, in 1959; and

WHEREAS, James R. Tallon's formative years were profoundly shaped by meeting his high school sweetheart, Norma, who would remain his lifelong partner and wife, and with whom he shared a deeply loving and meaningful life; and

WHEREAS, James R. Tallon, Jr. attended Syracuse University, where he earned his degree cum laude, benefitting from a Thomas Watson Scholarship and his commitment to the United States Army through the Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC), ultimately serving in Army Intelligence; and

WHEREAS, The couple's early years of marriage were marked by their time in Berlin, where Jim served in the United States Army, during which he encountered numerous life-changing experiences; and

WHEREAS, Following the completion of his military service, James R. Tallon, Jr. returned to Upstate New York, where he began his career in public service, finding fulfillment in his political and legislative career, including his election to the New York State Assembly in 1974; and

WHEREAS, As a New York State Assemblyman, James R. Tallon, Jr. was known for his patience, thoughtfulness, and ability to build consensus, skills which earned him a leadership position as Chairman of the Assembly Health Committee in 1979; and

WHEREAS, James R. Tallon's work in healthcare policy was transformative, particularly his role in the design and passage of the NYS Child Health Plus program in 1990, which expanded health insurance coverage to millions of children in New York State and served as the

model for the federal State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) enacted in 1997; and

WHEREAS, After 19 years as an Assemblyman, including five as the Assembly Majority Leader from 1987 until his retirement, James R. Tallon, Jr. left the legislature in 1993; and

WHEREAS, James R. Tallon's influence in healthcare policy continued throughout his tenure as President of the United Hospital Fund in New York City, where he championed efforts to improve healthcare systems both in New York State and across the Nation from 1993 until his retirement in 2017; and

WHEREAS, James R. Tallon's leadership, intellect, and dedication to public service have left an indelible mark on his community, the State of New York, and the Nation; he will be remembered not only for his professional accomplishments but also for his unwavering commitment to his family, his community, and his lifelong partnership with his beloved wife of 60 years, Norma; and

WHEREAS, An extraordinary healthcare leader, James R. Tallon, Jr. channeled his exemplary abilities as an educator, communicator, and consensus-builder toward the persistent fight for an effective and equitable health care system, accessible to all; his rare combination of intellect and empathy helped shape health policy and spark innovation to the great benefit of New York and New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his remarkable career, James R. Tallon, Jr. was a devoted and loving father to his three sons, James, Michael, and Edward, who were an integral part of his life and whom he cherished deeply; and

WHEREAS, Every citizen in New York State has most certainly benefited, in one way or another, from the deep dedication, intelligence and commitment that James R. Tallon, Jr. brought to his work as a mentor, legislator and public policy-maker; a loyal friend and trusted advisor, he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor and remember James R. Tallon, Jr. for his extraordinary contributions to his community, the State of New York, and the Nation, and to express its deepest condolences to his family, whose love and support were a testament to his profound legacy; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of James R. Tallon, Jr.