

BY: Senator KENNEDY

HONORING Buffalo Police K-9 Officer Craig E. Lehner 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, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life therein; and

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals it wishes to recognize for their valued contributions to the success and progress of society and publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Buffalo Police K-9 Officer Craig E. Lehner 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, Buffalo Police K-9 Officer Craig E. Lehner made the ultimate sacrifice on Friday, October 13, 2017, while faithfully executing his responsibilities, serving with dedication, loyalty and compassion; and

WHEREAS, A 34-year-old resident of Buffalo, New York, Officer Craig E. Lehner died in the line of duty following an underwater training exercise in the Niagara River; and

WHEREAS, Officer Craig E. Lehner served as a member of the Buffalo Police Department's Underwater Recovery team, as well as the Buffalo Police K-9 Unit, sharing an inseparable bond with his German Shepherd, Shield; and

WHEREAS, Officer Craig E. Lehner valiantly served his country as a member of the United States Army National Guard; a military police officer for 16 years, he was assigned to the 105th Military Police Company at Masten Armory in Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, Achieving the rank of Staff Sergeant, Officer Craig E. Lehner was deployed to Iraq in 2011, and served at Guantanamo Bay detention facility in Cuba from 2014 to 2015; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his military service, Officer Craig

E. Lehner was awarded more than a dozen medals, including the Army Commendation Medal, Air Assault Badge, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and five Army Achievement Medals; and

WHEREAS, A true asset to his beloved community, Officer Craig E. Lehner, along with his K-9 Officer Shield, gave tirelessly of their time and energies to Fantastic Friends, a local organization that works with children with special needs; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his father, Donald; and two brothers, Thomas and Jeffrey, Officer Craig E. Lehner is survived by his mother, Kathleen; siblings, Donna, her husband (Jeffrey), Michael, his wife (Chris), Linda, her husband (Jim), Kerry, her husband (Wayne) and Cherelyn, and her husband (Andrew); and several nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins; and

WHEREAS, Officer Craig E. Lehner exemplified what it truly means to give of himself in providing vital police services and in keeping with the noble mission of the Buffalo Police Department; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom 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 honor Buffalo Police K-9 Officer Craig E. Lehner 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 Buffalo Police K-9 Officer Craig E. Lehner.