

BY: Senator RANZENHOFER

HONORING Richard John Beyer upon the occasion of his bestowal of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays on February 3, 2018

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor those individuals whose exceptional athletic prowess leaves an enduring legacy in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Richard John Beyer upon the occasion of his bestowal of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays by Ambassador Reiichiro Takahashi, the Consul General of Japan in New York, to be presented at a Ceremony on Saturday, February 3, 2018, at The Buffalo Club in Buffalo, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Order of the Rising Sun is a Japanese order, established in 1875, by Emperor Meiji of Japan; the design of the Rising Sun symbolizes energy as powerful as the rising sun in parallel with the "rising sun" concept of Japan (Land of the Rising Sun); and

WHEREAS, The order is awarded to those who have made distinguished achievements in fields such as international relations, promotion of Japanese culture, advancements in their field, development in welfare or preservation of the environment; and

WHEREAS, In 1981, the modern version of this honor was first conferred on non-Japanese recipients, and women received the Order beginning in 2003; the awarding of the Order is administered by the Decoration Bureau of Office of the Prime Minister, and is given in the name of the Emperor; and

WHEREAS, Known by his ring name, "The Destroyer", Richard J. Beyer is still considered to be one of the most popular wrestlers in Japan, even after retiring professionally in 1993; he began wrestling in the United States in 1954, and after moving to Japan in the 1960s, he actively competed in the ring for three decades; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his esteemed wrestling career, Richard J. Beyer greatly contributed to the promotion of sports exchanges between Japan and the United States, and to the development of Japanese professional wrestling; for these long-lasting contributions, the Consul General of Japan in New York conferred him with the Consul General's commendation in April of 2012; and

WHEREAS, The Destroyer will always be recognized for enhancing the sport of Japanese professional wrestling through his bouts; his riveting matches against Rikido-zan on May 24, 1963, and Noboru Yutaka on February 26, 1965, garnered impressive television program ratings; and

WHEREAS, Through his larger than life persona on the mat, The Destroyer was instrumental in building a large professional wrestling fan base in Japan; through his hard work and vision, he helped build a bridge of understanding between Americans and Japanese citizens; and

WHEREAS, Since 1988, Richard J. Beyer has contributed to the promotion of sports exchanges between youth from Japan and the United States by sending young wrestling and swimming teams to Japan and, in turn, by hosting Japanese wrestling teams; he also assisted in introducing Park Golf, a newly created sport in Japan, to the States; and

WHEREAS, Always willing to meet with his fans and promote the sport he loved, Richard J. Beyer enjoyed signing autographs for charity at an annual summer festival in Tokyo for 30 years; for this valuable contribution, he received a letter of appreciation from the Mayor of Minato, Tokyo, on August 24, 2009; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable man also provided disaster assistance for survivors of the 3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake by hosting a fundraiser in the United States, and organizing a charity professional wrestling match in Japan; and

WHEREAS, Richard J. Beyer has clearly been an inspiration to the people of both the United States and Japan, and accordingly merits recognition and applause for his impressive dedication to others; and

WHEREAS, Sports competition instills the values of teamwork, pride and accomplishment, and Richard J. Beyer has clearly made a contribution to the spirit of excellence which is a tradition of his country; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Richard John Beyer upon the occasion of his bestowal of the Order of the Rising Star, Gold and Silver Rays on February 3, 2018; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Richard John Beyer.