

BY: Senator LAVALLE

HONORING John A. Berdinka upon the occasion of
being named the Westhampton Free Library Hometown
Hero on May 18, 2019

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; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor John A. Berdinka upon the occasion of being named the Westhampton Free Library Hometown Hero to be celebrated on Saturday, May 18, 2019, at the Westhampton Beach Fire House, Westhampton Beach, New York; and

WHEREAS, In January of 2018, the Westhampton Free Library culminated a year-long Hometown Hero program honoring local veterans; this year, the library is rekindling the program by paying tribute, each month, to a member of the American Legion; and

WHEREAS, For his courageous and dedicated service to his country, John A. Berdinka will be recognized at this year's May Hometown Hero Ceremony; and

WHEREAS, Born on October 18, 1946, John A. Berdinka grew up in Westhampton, graduating from Westhampton Beach High School in 1964; he went on to study automotive mechanics at Voorhees Technical Institute, part of the modern-day New York City College of Technology; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his studies, John A. Berdinka enlisted in the United States Navy; he completed boot camp at Naval Station Great Lakes in Illinois, and was sent to his first duty station in Adak, Alaska, where he spent eight months; and

WHEREAS, John A. Berdinka was then sent to the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Port Hueneme, California, where he was assigned to Naval Schools Construction and received heavy mechanic training before being transferred to the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Deployed to Vietnam with Mobil Construction Battalion 128, John A. Berdinka was assigned to a night field crew, working overnights to repair equipment in the field; and

WHEREAS, In July of 1968, John A. Berdinka was sent back to the United States to receive additional military and mechanical training; in December of the same year, he returned to Vietnam for another eight-month tour working in the shop; and

WHEREAS, Separated from active duty in August of 1969, John A. Berdinka returned to Westhampton, where he went to work for George

Eckart pumping gas and repairing cars, followed by a 10-year stint with Chesterfield Associates; and

WHEREAS, John A. Berdinka went on to have a distinguished career with the Southampton Town Highway Department as a shop foreman, a position he held for 25 years before retiring; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his wife of 47 years, Dot, and their four children, William, Matthew, Erik and Kristen, who have all shown him love and support and rejoice in his many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Active in his community, John A. Berdinka is a member of VFW Post No. 5350 and the Westhampton Beach Historical Society; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited their patriotism both at home and abroad, these men and women demonstrated their love for their country and merit forevermore, the highest respect of their 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 honor John A. Berdinka upon the occasion of being named the Westhampton Free Library Hometown Hero on May 18, 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to John A. Berdinka.