

BY: Senator KENNEDY

COMMENDING the Buffalo Bills upon the occasion of celebrating its 60th Anniversary as a professional football team

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to exemplary teams and organizations whose notable achievements add to the fabric of New York State and inspire our citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, this Legislative Body is proud to commend the Buffalo Bills upon the occasion of celebrating its 60th Anniversary as a professional football team; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Bills were the seventh team to be admitted to the American Football League, and one of the eight founding members of the league; and

WHEREAS, The franchise was awarded to legendary owner Ralph C. Wilson on October 28, 1959, originally playing games at the War Memorial Stadium in Buffalo, New York; and

WHEREAS, After a public contest, the team adopted the name "Buffalo Bills," after the former All-American Football Conference team in Buffalo, which in turn was named after the Buffalo Bills, a local barbershop quartet; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, the team won its first AFL Championship behind the MVP performance of running back Cookie Gilchrist; this championship was followed up with another one the next year, capping a schedule where they won 12 of their 14 games; and

WHEREAS, In 1970, the AFL and NFL merged, making the Bills a member of the new league; three years later, the Bills began playing their home games at Rich Stadium in Orchard Park, New York, which was renamed Ralph Wilson Stadium after their owner in 1998; and since 2015, they have occupied New Era Field in the same location; and

WHEREAS, In 1986, two future Hall of Famers, coach Marv Levy and quarterback Jim Kelly joined the organization; two years later in 1988, the team won the first of five AFC East titles in six years; and

WHEREAS, The Bills are the only team to play in four straight Super Bowls, spanning from 1991-1994; during that time, numerous legendary players and coaches were a vital part of the organization; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, the franchise was purchased by Terry and Kim Pegula, only the second owners in the history of the franchise and together, they have vowed to keep the team in Western New York; and

WHEREAS, The Bills have a passionate and energetic fan base known as the "Bills Mafia", who are counted on to cheer for their beloved team

every week during the season; so much so that in 1991, the loyal fans of the Bills helped set a NFL single-season attendance record of 635,889 fans; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Bills also serve the community through various charitable foundations, helping the less fortunate throughout Western New York and New York State; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious occasion presents a unique opportunity for this Legislative Body to pay tribute to the endless contributions the Buffalo Bills have presented Western New York and the greater Empire State as a whole; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Buffalo Bills upon the occasion of celebrating its 60th Anniversary, noting their endless accomplishments both on and off the field as the only professional football team stationed in New York State; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the players and personnel as well as the Co-Owners of the Buffalo Bills, Terry and Kim Pegula.