

Senate Resolution No. 2945

**BY:** Senator JORDAN

**COMMENDING** James J. Connell, Jr. 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,** 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 from this Legislative Body; and

**WHEREAS,** This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend James J. Connell, Jr. 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,** James Joseph Connell, Jr. was born to Alice (Merhige) and James Joseph Connell, Sr. on October 28, 1951, in Albany, New York; after he and his family moved to East Greenbush, New York, he graduated from Columbia High School in 1971; later, he earned his degree in journalism and photography from SUNY Morrisville in May of 1974; and

**WHEREAS,** James J. Connell, Jr. enlisted in the United States Marines on October 3, 1971, and proudly served his country as a rifleman for six years; and

**WHEREAS,** For his meritorious service, James J. Connell, Jr. was awarded six commendations for exemplary service; and

**WHEREAS,** Upon the completion of his active duty service, James J. Connell, Jr. worked as a freelance photo journalist for most of his career, contributing to many Capital District newspapers such as the **Glens Falls Post Star** and the **Amsterdam Recorder**; during the mid-1980s, he was the managing editor for the Albany Colonie Yankees' monthly publication; and

**WHEREAS,** From 1981-2000, James J. Connell, Jr. worked as a photo journalist with the New York State Air National Guard, retiring with the rank of Staff Sergeant after 19 years of service; during this time, he also worked for the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs for 15 years; and

**WHEREAS,** Never one to sit idle, James J. Connell, Jr. drove a school bus for the City of Rensselaer for more than three years, and most recently, he was a third base usher for the Philadelphia Phillies at their spring training site in Clearwater, Florida; and

**WHEREAS,** As an extension of his military career, James J. Connell, Jr. was also a lifelong Civil War enthusiast, historian, re-enactor with the 125th C Company, and author of a book entitled **A Lonely Battle Stance**; and

**WHEREAS,** James J. Connell, Jr. also enjoyed watching and rooting for the New York Yankees, and loved to spend time with his wife of 45 years, the former Gail E. Harwood; his two sons, Christopher (Shannon) and James J. IV (Felicia); two daughters, Dena (Ian) and Michelle (Patrick); and his 12 cherished grandchildren, Karlina, Cheyenne, Damian, Savannah, Breanna, Angelina, Alyssa, Kiley, Olivia, Logan, Abigail, and Casey; as his children were growing up, James J. Connell, Jr. could often be found coaching them on the baseball or softball diamond; and

**WHEREAS,** James J. Connell, Jr. died on July 23, 2019, at the age of 67; and

**WHEREAS,** Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, James J. Connell, Jr. demonstrated his love for his country and merits forevermore the highest respect of his 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 commend James J. Connell, Jr. 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 be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of James J. Connell, Jr.