

BY: Senator MYRIE

COMMENDING Dr. James Mahoney 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 the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those individuals within the Empire State who have made strong contributions to their communities and who inspire others through their model citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Mahoney has given not only of his time and energies but also of his competence, intelligence and leadership and consequently has been designated for special honor; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Dr. James Mahoney 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, Dr. James Mahoney, a lung specialist treating patients with severe respiratory illnesses, of Freeport, New York, died on Monday, April 27, 2020, at the age of 62, due to complications related to the novel coronavirus; and

WHEREAS, The middle of five children to Oscar Mahoney, who served in the United States Air Force, and the late Leila Mahoney, James grew up in military housing in Bermuda and on Nassau's South Shore; and

WHEREAS, To his friends, he was affectionately known as Charlie, a nickname one of his father's buddies gave him as a child; and

WHEREAS, A standout athlete, James Mahoney was the Captain of the football team at Roosevelt High School; while taking classes at what was then C.W. Post in Brookville, he took a job transporting patients at the Long Beach Hospital; this was when he knew he loved medicine; and

WHEREAS, James Mahoney graduated from SUNY Downstate College of Medicine, Class of 1986, and never left; he subsequently joined the Internal Medicine Residency Training Program, completing it in 1989 and was selected as one of the best residents to serve as Chief Resident from 1989-1990; and

WHEREAS, Following that appointment, Dr. James Mahoney joined the Pulmonary/Critical Care Fellowship, graduating in 1993; he then joined the faculty of the Department of Medicine as Assistant Professor of

Medicine and was a constant and reliable provider of primary care, pulmonary medicine, and critical care services to the community; furthermore, he won numerous awards, including Teacher of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Mahoney was an exceptional internist, pulmonologist, and critical care intensivist who served the Central Brooklyn community; his expertise in lung diseases and critical care positioned him as one of the most valuable physicians in the Department of Medicine; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Mahoney was planning on retiring in January, but then the pandemic hit; he knew the danger but did not hesitate to help when he saw another human being in need; he treated COVID-positive patients at SUNY Downstate and NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County, and refused to take a day off or to avoid close contact with his patients; and

WHEREAS, This brave man ran from crashing patient to crashing patient, always at the bedside where it was most dangerous; he ran in when others ran out and died doing what he loved to do best; and

WHEREAS, When he was not at a hospital caring for patients, Dr. James Mahoney was conducting telemedicine sessions with his regular patients from home, making sure they were wearing masks and washing their hands; and

WHEREAS, Well-respected and admired by both colleagues and patients, Dr. James Mahoney's accomplishments are all the more notable as African American doctors make up less than 5% of the physician workforce nation-wide; and

WHEREAS, If his patients were too sick or too busy to come to the hospital for routine checkups, Dr. James Mahoney would willingly make house calls; he not only healed people's bodies, he healed their minds and their souls; and

WHEREAS, With a stellar reputation for being the best of the best, Dr. James Mahoney was often referred to as University Hospital's "Jay-Z"; an inspiration for students, particularly African American students, he was a legend; and

WHEREAS, While in medical school, James Mahoney traveled to California, where he met Lisa Johnson; the couple married in 1987 and had three wonderful children, Jamie, Stephanie, and Ryan; James and Lisa divorced in 2004 but remained close friends; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Mahoney, who was a natural educator, constant storyteller and jokester, loved baseball, casinos and cruises; each year, he looked forward with great anticipation to his family cruise; and

WHEREAS, A man of great faith and a heart of gold, Dr. James Mahoney was indeed the embodiment of "Humanism in Medicine" in its finest form; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his father and three children, Dr. James Mahoney is survived by his two brothers, Dr. Melvin Mahoney (Mildred Llanetta) and Ronald Mahoney; two sisters, Rutha "Sissy" Mahoney and Saundra "Chick" (Douglas) Chisolm; and his girlfriend and life partner, Dawn Havens; as well as numerous friends and colleagues who will long cherish his memory; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Mahoney was extremely kind and compassionate, accepting, considerate, patient, generous, smart, and loving; he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Dr. James Mahoney 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 Dr. James Mahoney.