

Senate Resolution No. 1328

BY: Senator TEDISCO

COMMENDING Robert W. Van Pelt 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 Robert W. Van Pelt 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, Retired Command Sergeant Major Robert W. Van Pelt proudly served his country for 42 years as a member of the United States Army in numerous assignments in the Active Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve from 1969 until his retirement in June 2011; and

WHEREAS, Robert W. Van Pelt began his illustrious military career as a draftee in March of 1969; while attending Basic Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, he reenlisted and selected Fixed Station Automatic Digital Network Technical Controller as his Military Occupation Specialty; and

WHEREAS, After completing school, Robert W. Van Pelt was assigned to the First Signal Brigade, Phu Lam, Republic of Vietnam, serving from February of 1970 to February of 1971; following his tour in Vietnam, he was assigned to the United States Army Strategic Communications Command at Camp Darby, Coltano, Italy, until December of 1971; and

WHEREAS, Robert W. Van Pelt then left active duty and joined the New York Army National Guard where he served as a Multichannel Radio Chief with the 187th Signal Group; some years later, civilian job opportunities took him to Tennessee where he continued his Army career serving as the Communications Chief for Company A, 3/109 Armor with the Tennessee Army National Guard; and

WHEREAS, After returning to New York, Robert W. Van Pelt rejoined the New York Army National Guard where he rose through the ranks to Sergeant Major in March of 1987, and served as the operations Sergeant Major for the 187th Signal Brigade; and

WHEREAS, Appointed to Command Sergeant Major in October of 1991,

this brave soldier served as the Command Sergeant Major for the 242nd Signal Battalion, 1-101st Cavalry, 187th Signal Brigade, 53rd Troop

Command, and managed the Empire State Military Academy Signal School in Farmingdale, Long Island; and

WHEREAS, Command Sergeant Major Robert W. Van Pelt's leadership and duty performance resulted in his selection as the Division Command Sergeant Major for the historic 42nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, his distinguished Army career culminated in June of 2001, with his appointment as the Command Sergeant Major for the New York National Guard, the esteemed position he held until his retirement in June of 2011; and

WHEREAS, With a steadfast and unwavering commitment to serving his country and fellow Veterans, Robert W. Van Pelt accepted a position as the New York National Guard Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve program manager; in this capacity, he was instrumental in developing and maintaining the NYNG Job Zone website and was able to foster relationships between Veteran friendly employers and the Reserve Components; and

WHEREAS, This extraordinary man also established a strong relationship with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce which led to his organization of 27 job fairs for Servicemembers, Veterans and their family members throughout New York State; furthermore, he has attended countless Yellow Ribbon events for both deploying and returning Soldiers across New York State; and

WHEREAS, Even after retiring in June of 2017, Robert W. Van Pelt continues to attend these Yellow Ribbon events in support of our Servicemembers and also gave tirelessly of his time and energies as a New York National Guard Transition Assistant Advisor, aiding New York Guardsmen in their transition from Army service; and

WHEREAS, Robert W. Van Pelt is a longtime volunteer serving the Capital District of New York Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA); he started his leadership role with the Chapter serving as the Chapter Treasurer for four years (2008-2012) and then serving as the President for six years (2012-2018); and

WHEREAS, Today, Robert W. Van Pelt continues his volunteer support to his AUSA chapter serving as the 1st VP (Membership) and Chapter Executive Director; he is also the membership chairman for the 1st Signal Brigade Association, a nationwide organization; and

WHEREAS, Robert W. Van Pelt's selfless service also extends into the local communities where, since 1997, he has served as the chairman of the grants committee of the National Guard and Naval Militia Relief Society of New York, Inc., an organization that supports members of the New York State Militia in need; he is also a member of the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce Veterans Business Council and serves on the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery Volunteer Committee; and

WHEREAS, Having exhibited his patriotism both at home and abroad, Robert W. Van Pelt demonstrated his love for his country and merits forevermore the highest respect of his State and Nation; 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 Robert W. Van Pelt 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 Robert W. Van Pelt.