

BY: Senator AKSHAR

CONGRATULATING Ben Nelson upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service to Section IV Athletics

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality of life in the communities across this great State of New York is enriched by the diligence and compassionate commitment of those individuals whose singular purpose is the care and welfare of our student athletes; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate Ben Nelson upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service to Section IV Athletics; and

WHEREAS, An exceptional athlete, Ben Nelson lettered in baseball, basketball, track, volleyball and football before graduating from Bainbridge-Guilford High School in 1958; he then played basketball at Trinity Pawling, Colgate University and Louisiana University, and spent a year in Hannover, Germany as a player-coach for a Division II team; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return to the United States, Ben Nelson became involved in youth and high school athletics during summers at Camp Dudley for more than 60 years; and

WHEREAS, Ben Nelson began his long and distinguished career as an educator and administrator at Oxford Academy in Oxford, New York, as a math teacher and coach of boys and girls varsity basketball, cross country, and track and field teams bringing them to Section 4 Class C and Pioneer League Championships; and

WHEREAS, In 1988, Ben Nelson assumed the role of Director of Athletics at Oxford Academy, and 10 years later, he became the Executive Director of Section IV Athletics; in 2021, he will officially retire after more than two decades, making him New York State's longest serving Executive Director; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his tenure, Ben Nelson diligently worked to improve Section IV's finances and was instrumental in bringing numerous NYSPHSAA championship events to Section IV, including the 2017-2019 NYSPHSAA Boys Basketball Championships at the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena, baseball, field hockey, boys soccer, outdoor track & field and cross country; and

WHEREAS, Devoted to his profession and to the Section IV student-athletes, Ben Nelson attended every championship game or meet, and proudly watched as they captured numerous New York State titles; and

WHEREAS, Ben Nelson was the Assistant Executive Director for the

Basketball Coaches Association of New York (BCANY) and served on the organization's Board since its inception; he was also involved in numerous sports safety, academics and sportsmanship programs, and served on NYSPHSAA's Boys Basketball State Committee; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his esteemed career, Ben Nelson has been the proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including the Otis Sennett Award of Excellence, Distinguished Service Awards from the New York State Athletic Administrators Association, Golden Apple Award, Camp Dudley Man of the Year Award and Southern Tier Basketball Officials Dedication Award; and

WHEREAS, A greater Binghamton Sports Hall of Fame honoree, Ben Nelson was elected into the BCANY Hall of Fame in 2014, and was inducted into the New York State Public High School Athletic Association's Hall of Fame, Class of 2018; and

WHEREAS, For numerous years, Ben Nelson has been committed to guiding, molding and inspiring the team members toward their goals, and remains a source of inspiration and knowledge to all he has befriended, educated and mentored; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the quality of life in their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to the maintenance of high standards in their profession, certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Ben Nelson upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service to Section IV Athletics, and to wish him continued success in all his future endeavors; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Ben Nelson.