

BY: Senator HARCKHAM

MOURNING the death of Nick Springer, gold-medal winning Paralympian, inspirational speaker and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge outstanding athletes who distinguish themselves through their exceptional performance, attaining unprecedented success and the highest level of personal achievement; and

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Nick Springer, noting the significance of his purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Nick Springer of Croton, New York, died on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at the age of 35; and

WHEREAS, Born to Nancy and Gary Springer, Nick was an active and fun-loving child who dreamed of playing hockey for the New York Rangers; unfortunately, at the young age of 14, he contracted Meningococcal Meningitis, and consequently, had both legs amputated above the knees and both arms to mid-forearm; and

WHEREAS, Never one to quit or give up, Nick Springer continued to be active, and quickly learned how to use his limbs in a different way; he loved to swim and scuba dive and during high school, became involved with wheelchair sports such as snowboarding, sled hockey and rugby; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Croton-Harmon High School, Nick Springer continued to play Quadriplegic Wheelchair Rugby which was documented in the 2005 documentary "Murderball"; and

WHEREAS, Nick Springer quickly became an international star, and was a leading member of Team USA, helping them to capture six medals, including gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, and four World Cup golds; at the 2012 London Paralympics, he and Team USA took the bronze after falling to arch-rival Canada by one point in the semi-final game; and

WHEREAS, For more than a decade, Nick Springer lived in Phoenix, Arizona, where he helped rebuild the Ability 360 Phoenix Heat wheelchair rugby club team which went on to win three consecutive national titles; and

WHEREAS, In May of 2010, Nick Springer earned his degree in communications from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, and became a public speaker, using his charismatic good nature and personal stories to motivate and persuade audiences about the power of sports in disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Nick Springer spent the last few years consulting with Novartis, which was purchased by the international pharmaceutical

company GSK; in this capacity, he traveled throughout the United States and across the globe, speaking to health officials, education organizations, and others about the need for meningitis vaccination; and

WHEREAS, Through his tireless efforts, Nick Springer was instrumental in passing legislation to support vaccinations against the virus; and

WHEREAS, Nick Springer also served as a spokesperson for the National Meningitis Association (NMA), which his mother helped found, and Honorary Chairman of the NMA's annual gala, "Give Kids A Shot"; and

WHEREAS, When he was not working or helping someone, Nick Springer continued to be actively involved with the Phoenix Heat and played occasional tournaments with a Philadelphia team; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his mother, Nancy, Nick Springer is survived by his father, Gary, and his partner, Elizabeth; one sister, Olivia (Kevin); and one nephew, Jackson, as well as numerous other relatives, friends and athletes who were truly motivated by his passion, kindness and determination; and

WHEREAS, A gifted athlete and even better man, Nick Springer was a renowned role model in the sport of wheelchair rugby; his character and achievements stand as a sterling example and inspiration to all who would aspire to success; and

WHEREAS, Nick Springer was truly one of a kind; with a strong, yet humble spirit, he excelled at everything he did, and never allowed his disability to deter him from accomplishing his goals; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Nick Springer leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Nick Springer, gold-medal winning Paralympian, inspirational speaker and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Nick Springer.