Assembly Resolution No. 511

BY: M. of A. Peoples-Stokes

MOURNING the death of Joan Bozer, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavors served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Joan Bozer of Buffalo, New York, died on Thursday, May 4, 2023 at the age of 94; and

WHEREAS, A native of Westchester County, Joan Bozer was raised by her parents Tom and Ruth Kendig in Pelham Manor, New York, where she graduated from high school before attending Dean Junior College in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, After attending school in Massachusetts, Joan Bozer moved to Buffalo, New York, earning a Bachelor's degree in History and Government at SUNY's Empire State College; and

WHEREAS, In 1951, Joan Bozer married her husband, the late Dr. John Bozer, and was blessed to have five children, seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Dedicating her life to environmental advocacy, Joan Bozer founded and served as co-chair to the Western New York Sustainable Energy Association, formed the Friends of Olmstead Parks organization, which later became the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and helped to develop the National Association of Olmsted Parks; and

WHEREAS, Becoming active in politics, Joan Bozer was actively involved in the League of Women Voters; she also served as chair of the government relations committee of the Citizens Regional Transit Corporation, a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the area's automobile traffic through expansion of Metro Rail into the suburbs and to the airport; and

WHEREAS, As a testament to her leadership abilities, Joan Bozer served as president of the League of Women Voters, president of the Junior League of Buffalo, and chair of what was then known as the National Conference of Christians and Jews; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, Joan Bozer ran for a seat on the Buffalo City Council; soon thereafter she ran successfully to fill the position of County Legislator, representing the 4th District; and

WHEREAS, As a Legislator, Joan Bozer led drives which resulted in several milestone pieces of legislation, such as her fight to save the Old Post Office in the historic district of her community and convert it to the City Campus for SUNY Erie Community College; and

WHEREAS, Joan Bozer helped to change people's attitudes towards Buffalo's historic district, prided herself as one of Western New York's longtime preservation and environmental advocates, and served as a matriarch to the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy; and

WHEREAS, In addition to founding the Western New York Sustainable Energy Association with the goal to promote the development of renewable energy, Joan Bozer fought tirelessly to bring a solar-powered carousel to Buffalo's waterfront; her dream came true in 2021, when the Buffalo Heritage Carousel, built in 1924, was restored and opened at Canalside; and

WHEREAS, Exemplifying what it truly means to care about one's community, Joan Bozer received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Preservation Buffalo Niagara in 2014; and

WHEREAS, Joan Bozer was a beautiful light in the lives of all those with whom she came in contact; her infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through her family's vivid and happy memories, and her insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope to the countless lives she touched; and

WHEREAS, Joan Bozer is survived by her children, Alan, Timothy, Elizabeth, and Thomas; her grandchildren, Julia, Alexander, Caroline, Daniel, Katherine, Brigitte, and Charles; and her great-grandchildren, Helena, Samuel, Noa, Millie, and Lila; and

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

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Joan Bozer, and to express its deepest condolences to her family; and be it further

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