

BY: Senator COONEY

COMMENDING Dr. William Valenti, 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, Our Nation's physicians deserve acknowledgement and commendation for their selfless actions and tireless efforts to serve their patients and save the lives of others; Dr. William Valenti is one such hero; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Dr. William Valenti, 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. William Valenti, a nationally recognized HIV/AIDS physician who co-founded the organization that would eventually become Trillium Health, announced that he will be stepping down from his position after a long and distinguished career; and

WHEREAS, A lifetime resident of Rochester, New York, Dr. William Valenti began his medical career at the University of Rochester, where he held various teaching and clinical positions, including serving as the first epidemiologist at Strong Memorial Hospital from 1977 to 1988; and

WHEREAS, In 1989, Dr. William Valenti co-founded Community Health Network, an HIV/AIDS clinic which served patients during a time of widespread fear, uncertainty, and stigma against the LGBTQ+ community; for decades, he shaped the region's medical response, advising federal and state health agencies and supporting research that led to advances in treatment and prevention; and

WHEREAS, Since the emergence of AIDS in 1981, Dr. William Valenti helped to define the Rochester community's response to the deadly disease; he was a co-founder of AIDS Rochester, and he was a member of the Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS and Helping People with AIDS, a local fundraising group whose archives are now in the Smithsonian Museum of American History; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his career, Dr. William Valenti has been an advocate for combining the "art and science of medicine" for the benefit of his patients; he participated in early clinical trials, advocated for faster drug approvals, and helped to introduce a "one-stop-shop" model that combined medical care and supportive services for people living

with HIV/AIDS; and

WHEREAS, Dr. William Valenti has served as Advisor and Consultant to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health, focusing on infection control and HIV prevention and treatment; since 2014, he has been an active member of New York State's Task Force to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, Dr. William Valenti has served as Chair of the Infectious Diseases Committee of the Medical Society of the State of New York since 2009; he is also a Fellow of the Infectious Diseases Society of America and a member of the HIV Medicine Association; and

WHEREAS, Dr. William Valenti has published more than 150 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and scientific abstracts on HIV medical care, infectious diseases, healthcare epidemiology, and infection control; his HIV research has included antiretroviral therapies from AZT, the first drug approved for HIV treatment in 1987, to injectable medications for HIV treatment and prevention in 2025; and

WHEREAS, Dr. William Valenti has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Edward Mott Moore Award from the Monroe County Medical Society and the Dr. Linda Laubenstein Award for Excellence in HIV Care from the New York State AIDS Institute; he was also honored as one of six United States physicians making a difference in medicine by the AMA Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, Community Health Network evolved to become Trillium Health, which is now a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), serving 20,000 patients and clients across Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes; and

WHEREAS, Dr. William Valenti will continue to serve on the boards of the Rochester Area Community Foundation and the Rochester Academy of Medicine; he will also support Trillium Health's mission through the Trillium Health Foundation; his tireless efforts will continue to benefit the Rochester community, saving countless lives for years to come, and he deserves acknowledgement and appreciation from his fellow residents of New York State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Dr. William Valenti, 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 Dr. William Valenti.