Senate Resolution No. 13

BY: Senator STEC

COMMENDING Eric VanAuken 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, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend the caring concern and heroic acts of individuals who take prompt and appropriate action in emergency situations, nobly risking their own lives in an effort to preserve the life of another; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Eric VanAuken 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, On Thursday, August 1, 2024, Eric VanAuken gathered with his fellow employees on the dock at the Lake George Club located on the shore of Lake George; Eric VanAuken had decided to go for a swim following his shift, and invited a coworker to the waterfront to join him; and

WHEREAS, Suddenly and inexplicably, his coworker, who does not know how to swim, dove into the water, rising to the surface immediately in need of assistance; Eric VanAuken sprang into action, immediately attempting to aid the struggling individual, but was not successful due to the victim's thrashing attempts to keep afloat; and

WHEREAS, The Lake George Club sailing instructor, Brandon Gruttemeyer, immediately leapt into action to find a flashlight; he rushed back to the scene and was able to locate the struggling individual; the victim was found under 10-12 feet of water; and

WHEREAS, Eric VanAuken and Brandon Gruttemeyer were able to pull the individual in need from the water, and began administering CPR compressions as well as mouth-to-mouth maneuvers; and

WHEREAS, Emergency medical service professionals arrived at the scene and were able to get the victim to a point of stabilized breathing with a strong pulse; and

WHEREAS, Once at Glens Falls Hospital, the condition of the victim began decreasing and destabilizing rapidly, causing the immediate transfer of the individual to Albany Medical Center where an expert team of specially trained healthcare professionals utilized equipment known

as an extracorporeal membrane oxygenation machine; this decision was paramount to ensuring the individual's opportunity for recovery; and

WHEREAS, The victim showed signs of great improvement over the days following the incident, sitting up, smiling, and responding to his father's voice; the likes of which were able to occur due to the swift and lifesaving efforts of Eric VanAuken that night; and

WHEREAS, A truly brave and courageous man, Eric VanAuken played a vital role in this extraordinary rescue effort, and should be praised by the people of this great Empire State for his astute actions in working to preserve the life of another; and

WHEREAS, Eric VanAuken, in his spontaneous and heroic act, has so aptly demonstrated his character and compassion for the welfare of others, personifying, by virtue of his action, the collective concern of ordinary citizens across the community of New York State who voluntarily respond without thought of danger or reward when others are in need of help; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Eric VanAuken 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 Eric VanAuken.