

Senate Resolution No. 1412

BY: Senator HARCKHAM

MOURNING the death of the Honorable John W. Sweeny Jr., distinguished citizen, judge, and devoted member of his 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 endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable John W. Sweeny Jr. of Putnam County, New York, died on Saturday, October 25, 2025, at the age of 76; and

WHEREAS, A man of extraordinary intelligence, integrity, and quiet grace, John W. Sweeny Jr., was born to late Justice John W. Sweeny Sr. and the late Isabel Sweeny; and

WHEREAS, John W. Sweeny Jr. earned his A.B. in government from the University of Notre Dame and received his J.D. from Fordham University School of Law, where he would later serve on the Alumni Board; and

WHEREAS, John W. Sweeny Jr. distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, After beginning his legal career in private practice, John W. Sweeny Jr. joined the Putnam County District Attorney's Office as administrative assistant district attorney, subsequently serving as confidential law secretary to two Supreme Court Justices; and

WHEREAS, After demonstrating his abilities, skill, and knowledge, John W. Sweeny Jr. was elected as Putnam County Court Judge, where he dealt with cases in the Family, Criminal, Surrogate, and Supreme Courts; and

WHEREAS, In 2000, John W. Sweeny Jr. was elected as Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, serving as the Senior Resident Justice for Putnam County; and

WHEREAS, In 2004, John W. Sweeny Jr. was appointed as Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department by New York State Governor Pataki; he made history by being the first Putnam County judge to sit in that court; and

WHEREAS, New York State Governor Paterson made John W. Sweeny Jr. a Constitutional Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department, and he won re-election to the Supreme Court in 2014 and was later re-appointed to the Appellate Division by New York State Governor Cuomo; and

WHEREAS, Outside the courtroom, John W. Sweeny Jr. was an active

member in his community and engaged in various types of charitable work, such as volunteering at the Putnam 4-H Fair and Holiday on the Lake, serving as president of the Putnam County chapter of the American Cancer Society, and sitting on the Putnam Arts Council board; and

WHEREAS, As a proud Irish-American, John W. Sweeny Jr. co-founded the Putnam County Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and served as Grand Marshal of the Putnam-Northern Westchester St. Patrick's Day Parade; and

WHEREAS, John W. Sweeny Jr. was a member of several professional organizations such as the New York State Trial Lawyers Association, and he served in leadership roles within the New York State Bar Association, the Association of Family Court Judges, and various state commissions aimed at improving various aspects of the court system; and

WHEREAS, For his distinguished service to New York State and his local community, John W. Sweeny Jr. was honored with several awards, including the U.S. Army Reserve Employer Support Award from the Department of the Army, the Society of Irish American Lawyers 2020 Distinguished Achievement Award, and the Distinguished Service Award by the Stephen P. Driscoll Lodge of New York State Fraternal Order of Police; and

WHEREAS, Most recently, John W. Sweeny Jr. was recognized as a "Living Landmark of Putnam County" due to his lifelong contributions to the community and his historical achievements; and

WHEREAS, John W. Sweeny Jr.'s commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, John W. Sweeny Jr. is survived by his loving wife of 43 years, Alana; his sons, James (Kelcey), Brian, and Patrick; his chosen fourth son, Michael Schmutzer; and other family members; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, John W. Sweeny Jr. 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 the Honorable John W. Sweeny Jr., distinguished citizen, judge, 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 the Honorable John W. Sweeny Jr.