Senate Resolution No. 1581

BY: Senator CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK

COMMENDING Joseph Bitetto 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 Joseph Bitetto 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, Born and raised in Island Park, New York, Joseph Bitetto has devoted himself to his community through nearly a decade of service with the Island Park Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Bitetto joined the department in May 2016 as a member of the Hose Company and, in recognition of his leadership and dedication, was elected Captain of the Hose Company in April 2024; and

WHEREAS, On December 20, 2025, Joseph Bitetto and his fiancee Megan Walsh were walking across Mirror Lake in Lake Placid, New York when a family of three walking in front of them suddenly fell through the ice near the shoreline; and

WHEREAS, Calling upon his training and experience, Joseph Bitetto sprang into action, battling freezing temperatures, heavy winter clothing, and unstable ice conditions to pull the couple and their young daughter from the frigid waters; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Bitetto remained calm and focused as he positioned himself safely on the shore and reached out for the mother and child first, then, through the cries of the traumatized child, he was able to get the father to safety as well; and

WHEREAS, Thanks to his quick and decisive action, Joseph Bitetto was able to assist the family rapidly and prevent them from suffering any serious injuries; and

WHEREAS, After the ordeal, Joseph Bitetto advised the family to find a warm place to dry off; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Bitetto's commitment to helping others extends well beyond the call of duty as in March of 2025, he performed CPR on a choking victim at a local establishment while enjoying a meal with friends; and

WHEREAS, For his heroic acts and his service as a firefighter, Joseph Bitetto has been honored and recognized by the Village of Island Park with a citation and key to the city as well as being recognized for his lifesaving actions by the Town of Hempstead Town Board members; and

WHEREAS, In his spontaneous and heroic actions, Joseph Bitetto demonstrated his character and compassion for the welfare of others, exemplifying the best qualities inherent in our citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Joseph Bitetto 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 Joseph Bitetto.