

BY: M. of A. Lavine

HONORING the life and legacy of Charles Dolan, a visionary telecommunications mogul, and a tireless advocate for pancreatic cancer research

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, Charles Dolan of Cove Neck, Long Island, New York, died on Saturday, December 28, 2024, at the age of 98; and

WHEREAS, Charles Dolan was born in 1926 in Cleveland, Ohio; his proclivity for innovation began at the age of 16, when he began publishing a weekly Boy Scout column in a local Cleveland newspaper; in high school, he continued in the media industry and worked at a Cleveland radio station; shortly thereafter, he served in the United States Air Force during World War II; once his service concluded, he returned to Ohio to attend John Carroll University; and

WHEREAS, During his college years, Charles Dolan met fellow student Helen Burgess; they would go on to be married for 73 wonderful years until her passing in 2023; the two eventually built and sold an editing and producing company; using the proceeds from the sale, the two moved to New York and formed Sterling Movies USA, which distributed industrial films to targeted audiences; and

WHEREAS, Sterling Movies USA led to Charles Dolan's ground-breaking idea of using coaxial cables to deliver better TV signals to New Yorkers than rooftop antennas, as well as one of his earliest ventures, Teleguide, allowed hotels to receive targeted local news and information to guests; and

WHEREAS, A few years later, in 1964, Charles Dolan secured the right to wire lower Manhattan from the City and struck a deal with Madison Square Garden for the exclusive rights to air National Basketball Association and National Hockey League playoff games; and

WHEREAS, Charles Dolan envisioned a commercial-free TV channel, and subsequently launched Home Box Office (HBO) channel; and

WHEREAS, After selling HBO, Charles Dolan purchased a new cable system in Long Island, called Cablevision, which, at its height, was the fifth-largest cable provider in the United States; years later, Charles Dolan founded the American Movie Classics (AMC) television station in 1984, which became part of AMC Networks, another of Charles Dolan's business ventures; he was also the innovator behind the first 24-hour cable channel for local news in the United States, News 12; and

WHEREAS, Charles Dolan continued to make an indelible mark on New

York and Long Island through Cablevision's acquisition of Madison Square Garden and its sports teams, the New York Knicks and New York Rangers in 1994; and

WHEREAS, Beyond his unrelenting pursuit of success in media and communications, Charles Dolan will be remembered for his generous philanthropic contributions, including his role as the Founder and Chairman Emeritus of the Lustgarten Foundation, the largest private funder of pancreatic cancer research today, as well as the Dolan Family Foundation and the Dolan Children's Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Through all his philanthropy, Charles Dolan never forgot his home: Cove Neck, Long Island; he became involved with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in 1968, an institution famous for its research on cancer, neuroscience, plant biology and genomics; in 2017, he and his wife Helen were awarded Double Helix Medals in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the laboratory; Charles and Helen Dolan were also steadfast supporters of the Community Foundation of Oyster Bay and Friends Academy in Glen Cove; and

WHEREAS, Charles Dolan is survived by his six children, 19 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a trailblazing spirit, Charles Dolan forever changed the telecommunications and media industries by founding iconic businesses in sports, entertainment, and media; he leaves behind a legacy that will long endure the passage of time; he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the life and legacy of Charles Dolan, and to express its deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all those who had the sincere pleasure of knowing him; and be it further

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