Assembly Resolution No. 685

BY: M. of A. Peoples-Stokes

MOURNING the death of Lawrence H. Cook II, distinguished citizen 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 the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II, of Niagara Falls, New York, died on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at the age of 60; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II, whose success in his work with nonprofit organizations led him to be chosen for advisory roles in local and state government, distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II was born to Lawrence H. and Josephine (Chapman) Cook in Niagara Falls on March 11, 1965; he was the younger of two sons; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Niagara Falls High School, Lawrence H. Cook II earned a bachelor's degree from Buffalo State College (now University) and took part in certificate programs at Canisius College (now University) and the University at Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II started at the Arts Council of Buffalo & Erie County as Assistant in the Regrant Program for arts organizations and became the Council's Deputy Director; and

WHEREAS, For 15 years, Lawrence H. Cook II was Program Manager and Executive with the John R. Oishei Foundation where he worked with nonprofit organizations in the arts and heritage; previously, he was Vice Chairman of the Niagara Falls Financial Advisory Board which made a one-year study of the City's fiscal policies and offered recommendations; and

WHEREAS, After joining the Oishei Foundation as Program Director in 2008, Lawrence H. Cook II led the Mobile Safety-Net Team, a group of young professionals who brought program services to 12 economically distressed communities in Erie and Niagara Counties in the wake of the Great Recession of 2008; the team took surveys, assessed needs, built partnerships with other agencies, and assisted with writing grants; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II was promoted to Senior Program Officer in 2013 and became Vice President three years later; the Mayor of Niagara Falls appointed him to the Niagara Falls Housing Authority in 2016, and he went on to become Chairman; and

WHEREAS, In 2019, Lawrence H. Cook II was honored by the North Tonawanda Common Council for leading the City's Community Resource Hub which gave residents a convenient way to find access to services; in

2021, he was appointed to the New York State Council on the Arts, one of two members representing the Western New York Region, by Governor Andrew Cuomo; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II always acted with conviction and a deep commitment to his community; he moved quietly, yet his influence was powerful and lasting, and he was a true artist in the balance of strength and gentleness; he was also known as diligent, good-natured, and creative in problem solving; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence H. Cook II is survived by his daughters, Lexi Cook and Lela Cook; former wife, Rosemary Howard; brother, Steven; and stepson, Philip Howard; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Lawrence H. Cook II 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 Lawrence H. Cook II; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Lawrence H. Cook II.