Assembly Resolution No. 985

BY: M. of A. Friend

HONORING Investigator Michael Theetge of the Chemung County Sheriff's Office upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Order of the Blue Heart Award from Wounded Blue

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and commend outstanding law enforcement professionals whose courage, leadership, and commitment to public safety reflect the highest ideals of service to their community and the people of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Investigator Michael Theetge of the Chemung County Sheriff's Office upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Order of the Blue Heart Award from Wounded Blue, the only national organization dedicated to supporting law enforcement officers injured or disabled on the job; and

WHEREAS, Investigator Michael Theetge has served with distinction for more than 14 years with the Chemung County Sheriff's Office, where he currently serves in the Criminal Investigation Division and has dedicated his career to protecting and serving the residents of Chemung County; and

WHEREAS, Investigator Michael Theetge was slated for promotion to Sergeant in the Criminal Investigation Division in June 2024 in recognition of his exemplary service, dedication, leadership, and professionalism; however, this promotion was postponed after he sustained a severe on-duty injury on March 29, 2024, while attempting to apprehend a suspect, an incident from which he is courageously recovering and working toward returning to duty; and

WHEREAS, During the pursuit that led to his injury, Investigator Michael Theetge suffered a fractured skull and brain bleeding, requiring an extended period of hospitalization and rehabilitation, including transferring to a specialized medical facility and continuing out-patient therapy as he has worked diligently to regain his health; and

WHEREAS, Despite the long and difficult road of recovery, Investigator Michael Theetge has shared that his goal from the beginning of his rehabilitation has been to return to his work and serve his community again, demonstrating his resilience and unwavering commitment to public safety and the responsibilities of his career; and

WHEREAS, Beyond his duties in the Criminal Investigation Division, Investigator Michael Theetge has long served as commander of the Chemung County SWAT Team, providing critical leadership for high-risk operations and ensuring the team's preparedness and effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed honoree, Investigator Michael Theetge, has also served as an instructor for 'Firearms,' 'RBT,' and 'General Topics' courses, playing a central role in training members of the Sheriff's Office and helping develop in-service training that advances the professionalism of the entire agency; and

WHEREAS, Investigator Michael Theetge was the first drug recognition expert in his department and was recognized for earning the highest grade point average in his training, demonstrating his commitment to excellence and advanced skill in identifying impaired drivers; and

WHEREAS, A member of the New York State Threat Assessment Management System (TAMS) team, Investigator Michael Theetge regularly conducts threat assessments for schools and local businesses to enhance community safety; and

WHEREAS, Investigator Michael Theetge serves with distinction as president of the Deputy Sheriff's Union, a position he was elected to by his peers, reflecting the profound respect and confidence that fellow deputies place in his leadership and judgment; and

WHEREAS, Respected by all members of the agency, including supervisors who frequently seek his counsel, Investigator Michael Theetge exemplifies the values of integrity, professionalism, and selfless service; and

WHEREAS, Through his courageous service, steadfast leadership, and ongoing recovery, Investigator Michael Theetge has made an enduring impact on the Chemung County Sheriff's Office, his community, and the people of this great State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor and commend Investigator Michael Theetge for his exemplary service, leadership, and dedication to public safety, and to extend to him best wishes for continued progress in his recovery and future service; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Investigator Michael Theetge as an enduring token of the respect and gratitude of this Legislative Body.