

2013-J422

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Edward I. Koch, former New York City Mayor and esteemed public leader

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body, proudly representing the people of the State of New York, is moved to pause this day to recognize and pay tribute to the life and distinguished service of Edward I. Koch, the 105th Mayor of the great City of New York; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch, who served three terms as Mayor of the City of New York, from January 1, 1978 until December 31, 1989, died on Friday, February 1, 2013, at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, This remarkable public leader and staunch supporter of Israel was well-known and admired for his whirlwind life as a television judge, radio talk-show host, author, law partner, newspaper columnist, movie reviewer, professor, commercial pitchman and politician; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch was a visionary who used his political acumen to bring his dreams to fruition and to blaze a trail wide enough for a generation of New Yorkers to follow; and

WHEREAS, The son of Jewish immigrants, Louis and Joyce Silpe Koch, Edward I. Koch was born in Crotona Park East in the Bronx, New York City, on December 12, 1924; he left college to serve his country as a member of the United States Army during World War II, earning two battle stars in Europe as an infantryman and was discharged in 1946, as a sergeant; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch returned to the City College of New York, and earned a bachelor's degree in 1981; he went on to receive his law degree in 1948, from New York University and was admitted to the New York State bar the following year; over the next 20 years, he practiced law in New York City, becoming a founding partner of Koch, Lankenau, Schwartz & Kovner in 1963; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch was elected to the City Council in 1967, serving for two years prior to his election to the United States Congress in 1969, representing the East Side of Manhattan with distinction for years; and

WHEREAS, An irrepressible icon, his 12-year mayoralty encompassed the

fiscal austerity of the late 1970s and many other complex issues; and
WHEREAS, Mayor Edward I. Koch is credited with leading the New York City government back from near bankruptcy in the 1970s to prosperity in the 1980s; he also began one of the City's most ambitious housing programs, which continued after he left office and eventually built or rehabilitated more than 200,000 housing units, revitalizing several neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, As Mayor, Edward I. Koch held down spending, restoring the City's creditworthiness, and began the restoration of much of the City's infrastructure, including its bridges and streets; and

WHEREAS, Re-elected in 1981, Mayor Edward I. Koch markedly improved the City's finances during his second term in office; he hired workers back and restored many municipal services; in addition, he made plans for major housing programs, improvements in education and efforts to reduce welfare dependency; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, Edward I. Koch was elected to a third term as Mayor of the City of New York, during which his efforts enabled the City to get back into the bond markets, paving the road to recovery; the housing plan, based on dozens of city financing and ownership programs, became a notable and long-lasting success; and

WHEREAS, By the end of the Koch administration, 3,000 apartments had been created in formerly vacant buildings, 13,000 more were under construction, and design work had begun on 20,000 more; and

WHEREAS, After leaving office, Edward I. Koch presented forums on television and radio; he also authored numerous newspaper articles for THE POST and THE DAILY NEWS, and magazine articles for such periodicals as the JEWISH WORLD REVIEW, as well as books; and

WHEREAS, He became an adjunct professor at New York University, Brandeis University and Baruch College of the City University of New York, and gave lectures across the country; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch made regular appearances on WCBS-TV, had talk shows on Fox television and on WNEW and WABC radio, teamed with former Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato for a Bloomberg Radio program, and was a frequent commentator on the local news television station NY1; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch appeared, mostly as himself, in a score of movies, including "The Muppets Take Manhattan" and "The First Wives Club," and in cameo roles on television shows, including "Sex and the

City"; he also made commercials for Coca-Cola, Snapple, FreshDirect and Ultra Slim-Fast; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, he was the star of "Koch," the documentary film by Neil Barsky that had its premiere at the Museum of Modern Art; and
WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch became a partner in Robinson, Silverman, Pearce, Aronsohn & Berman, which in a 2002 merger, became Bryan Cave, an international law firm and one of the largest real estate practices in New York; and

WHEREAS, From 1997 to 1999, he was the judge on the nationally syndicated show "The People's Court"; and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch continued to write books, a total of 17, including murder mysteries and commentaries on politics, rivals and other subjects; most were a blend of his insights, experiences and observations with co-authors providing the workaday prose; while in office, he produced MAYOR (1984), POLITICS (1985) and HIS EMINENCE AND HIZZONER (1989); and

WHEREAS, Later came ALL THE BEST: LETTERS FROM A FEISTY MAYOR (1990), ED KOCH ON EVERYTHING (1994), I'M NOT DONE YET (2000) and BUZZ: HOW TO CREATE IT AND WIN WITH IT (2007); and

WHEREAS, Edward I. Koch and his sister wrote a small volume, EDDIE: HAROLD'S LITTLE BROTHER, a children's book that appeared in 2004; and
WHEREAS, Predeceased by his brother, Harold M. Koch, Edward I. Koch is survived by his sister, Pat Koch Thaler, a former dean at New York University; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the impressive conviction, dedication and commitment shown by an individual for the benefit of his community and fellow man, such as that which has been demonstrated by Edward I. Koch throughout his purposeful life and distinguished career; his colorful character, his bold spirit, and his sharp wit will be missed by many; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Edward I. Koch, former New York City Mayor and esteemed public leader; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Pat Koch Thaler.