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Res. No. 473

Resolution mourning the death and celebrating the life President Ronald Reagan, who passed away on June 5, 2004.

By Council Member McMahon

Whereas, Ronald Wilson Reagan was born to Nelle and John Reagan in Tampico, Illinois, in 1911. He attended high school in nearby Dixon and then worked his way through Eureka College. There, he studied economics and sociology, played on the football team, and acted in school plays. Upon graduation, he became a radio sports announcer. A screen test in 1937 won him a contract in Hollywood. During the next two decades he appeared in 53 films; and

Whereas, As president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan became embroiled in disputes over the issue of Communism in the film industry; his political views shifted from liberal to conservative. He toured the country as a television host, becoming a spokesman for conservatism. In 1966 he was elected Governor of California by a margin of a million votes; he was re-elected in 1970; and

Whereas, Ronald Reagan won the Republican Presidential nomination in 1980 and chose as his running mate former Texas

Congressman and United Nations Ambassador George Bush. Voters troubled by inflation and by the year-long confinement of Americans in Iran swept the Republican ticket into office. Reagan won 489 electoral votes to 49 for President Jimmy Carter; and

Whereas, On January 20, 1981, Reagan took office. Only 69 days later he was shot by a would-be assassin, but quickly recovered and returned to duty. His grace and wit during the dangerous incident caused his popularity to soar; and

Whereas, Dealing skillfully with Congress, Reagan obtained legislation to stimulate economic growth, curb inflation, increase employment, and strengthen national defense. He embarked upon a course of cutting taxes and Government expenditures, refusing to deviate from it when the strengthening of defense forces led to

a large deficit; and

Whereas, In foreign policy, Reagan sought to achieve "peace through strength." During his two terms he increased defense spending 35 percent, but sought to improve relations with the Soviet Union. In dramatic meetings with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, he negotiated a treaty that would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Reagan declared war against international terrorism, sending American bombers against Libya after evidence came out that Libya was involved in an attack on American soldiers in a West Berlin nightclub; and

Whereas, Overall, the Reagan years saw a restoration of prosperity, and the goal of peace through strength seemed to be within grasp.; he was true leader, and his legacy of positive change within the United States military has benefited countless lives; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York mourns the death and celebrates the life of Ronald Wilson Reagan, who passed away on June 5, 2004.

WA:
LS#1244
6/23/04