

2023-J1286

Senate Resolution No. 1286

BY: Senator BRESLIN

COMMENDING Alicia Ouellette upon the occasion of stepping down after nearly nine years of distinguished service as Dean of Albany Law School

WHEREAS, New York State's commitment to education is unparalleled; its history and stature are secured by the superlative caliber of its educational professionals and the students they inspire; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to acknowledge the significant milestones in the distinguished careers of those outstanding educational leaders, whose dedication and achievements have been instrumental in developing character and academic excellence in the young people of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Alicia Ouellette upon the occasion of stepping down after nearly nine years of distinguished service as Dean of Albany Law School; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Longmeadow High School in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, Alicia Ouellette earned her bachelor's degree in psychology cum laude from Hamilton College in 1988; six years later, she graduated magna cum laude in 1994 from Albany Law School, where she was Editor-in-Chief of the Albany Law Review; and

WHEREAS, Alicia Ouellette began her distinguished law career as Assistant Solicitor General in the New York State Attorney General's Office and a law clerk to the Honorable Howard A. Levine at the New York Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, In 2001, Alicia Ouellette began her academia career as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Intellectual Life and a professor of law; in October of 2014, she assumed the title of Dean before being officially named the 18th President and Dean by the Board of Trustees in January of 2015; she will step down from this role on Friday, June 30, 2023, and after a much-deserved sabbatical, she plans to stay with the law school in a teaching position; and

WHEREAS, Throughout her tenure, Alicia Ouellette has truly made a positive difference to not only the students of Albany Law, but also, the staff and alumni, and the Capital Region as a whole; and

WHEREAS, As Dean and President, Alicia Ouellette pursued several important initiatives including the launch of a new strategic plan, creation of new programs, and fundraising initiatives such as the creation of a new strategic plan that led to historic growth in the size, diversity and quality of the student body; and graduation of over 1,000 students who are now leading attorneys in public offices and private firms, presiding judges, CEOs, entrepreneurs, advocates, and serving clients around the world; and

WHEREAS, Alicia Ouellette was also instrumental in the completion of the historic "We Rise Together" Campaign which brought \$33 million to

the law school; navigation of the law school through a once-in-a-century global pandemic with a transition to fully remote teaching and back again; successful completion of a Middle States Commission on Higher

Education accreditation process in 2020 that began in 2016; launch of the Online Graduate Programs which now has five academic disciplines and continues to grow; a bar passage rate for first-time takers routinely in the mid-80% (including a 14.5% jump in 2016) which outpaces the New York State average; an employment rate routinely around 90% for first-year graduates joining law firms, government positions, public interest work, businesses, and industry; a visit by sitting Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor in April 2017 for Kate Stoneman Day; countless academic citations, leadership positions, and media appearances across the country; as well as the creation of a formal academic partnership with the University at Albany; and

WHEREAS, For her steadfast and unrelenting commitment to the Albany Law School, Alicia Ouellette was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the 2022 Academic Laureate Award from the University at Albany Foundation; and

WHEREAS, As a scholar, Alicia Ouellette focuses on health law, disability rights, family law, children's rights, and human reproduction; her book, *Bioethics and Disability: Toward a Disability Conscious Bioethics*, was published in 2011, and she has authored numerous articles published in academic journals such as the *American Journal of Law and Medicine*, *American Journal of Bioethics*, *Nevada Law Journal*, *Hastings Law Journal*, *Indiana Law Journal*, and *Oregon Law Review*; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Alicia Ouellette has traveled around the world sharing her knowledge and insight with organizations such as the Yale School of Medicine and the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to her profession, Alicia Ouellette has served in leadership positions for numerous professional and community

organizations, including as chair of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Section for Deans, secretary and a board member for the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU), secretary and a board member for the Burdett Birthing Center in Troy, New York, and a board member for the University at Albany's Institute for Health and Human Rights; and

WHEREAS, In September of 2020, Alicia Ouellette was appointed to New York Governor's COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force; and

WHEREAS, Alicia Ouellette has clearly had an enduring impact on the students at the Albany Law School, as well as on the community-at-large, and accordingly merits recognition and applause for her impressive dedication to others; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to commend the efforts of those individuals who work to support our proud tradition of institutions of higher education by providing their skills and talents to our colleges; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Alicia Ouellette upon the occasion of stepping down after nearly

nine years of distinguished service as Dean of Albany Law School, and to wish her continued success in all her future endeavors; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Alicia Ouellette.