

2015-K307

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing the 150th Anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's death on April 15, 2015, and paying tribute to his many accomplishments

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals of remarkable courage and strength of character who lived their lives for others, and who stood for liberty and democracy; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is moved to memorialize the 150th Anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's death on April 15, 2015, and pay tribute to his many accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, The 16th President of our great Nation, Abraham Lincoln is regarded as one of America's greatest heroes due to both his incredible impact on the Nation and his unique appeal; he rose from humble beginnings to achieve the highest office in the land; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln's humane personality and historical role as savior of the Union during the United States Civil War and emancipator of the slaves, creates a legacy that endures today; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Hardin County, Kentucky, to Thomas and Nancy (Hanks) Lincoln; his mother died at a young age; his father then married Sarah Bush Johnson, a strong and affectionate woman with whom young Abraham quickly bonded; it was his stepmother who encouraged him to read and educate himself; and

WHEREAS, At the age of 22, Abraham Lincoln left the home and made a living splitting wood; he migrated to the small community of New Salem, Illinois, where, throughout the years, he worked as a shopkeeper, postmaster, and an owner of a general store; and

WHEREAS, In 1834, Abraham Lincoln was elected to the Illinois State Legislature as a member of the Whig Party; he then became interested in becoming a lawyer, teaching himself the law by reading William Blackstone's COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND; three years later, he was admitted to the bar and began to practice in the John T. Stuart law firm; and

WHEREAS, From 1847 to 1849, Abraham Lincoln served a single term in the United States House of Representatives; after an unsuccessful tenure, he returned to Springfield, Illinois, to practice law; and

WHEREAS, By the 1850s, the railroad industry was moving west and Illinois found itself becoming a major hub for various companies; Abraham Lincoln served as the attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad; and

WHEREAS, On November 4, 1842, Abraham Lincoln married Mary Todd; the couple had four children, of which only one, Robert, survived to adulthood; and

WHEREAS, In 1854, Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act which allowed individual states and territories to decide for themselves whether to allow slavery; this action awakened Abraham Lincoln's political zeal once again, and his views on slavery moved toward moral indignation; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln believed that America's founders intended that all men were created with certain inalienable rights; he decided to challenge sitting United States Senator Stephen Douglas for his seat; and

WHEREAS, Even though he lost the election, Abraham Lincoln was vaulted into national politics; in 1860, political operatives in Illinois organized a campaign to support him for the presidency; and

WHEREAS, In the general election, Abraham Lincoln carried 180 of 303 Electoral votes, winning the presidency; he selected a strong cabinet

which became one of his strongest assets in his first term of office; and

WHEREAS, Before President Abraham Lincoln's inauguration in March of 1861, seven Southern states had seceded from the Union and by April, the United States military installation Fort Sumter was under siege in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina; in the early morning hours of April 12, 1861, America's costliest and most deadly conflict began; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln responded to the crisis wielding powers as no other President before him; he distributed funds from the Treasury for war material without an appropriation from Congress, called for 75,000 volunteers to join the military without a declaration of war, and suspended the writ of habeas corpus, arresting and imprisoning suspected Confederate sympathizers without a warrant; and

WHEREAS, From all directions, President Abraham Lincoln faced dispar-

agement and defiance; he was often at odds with his Generals, his Cabinet, his party and a majority of the American people; and

WHEREAS, After a difficult first year and a half of battle, a conclusive Union victory at Antietam on September 22, 1862, boosted morale; President Abraham Lincoln felt confident enough to reshape the cause of the war from union to abolishing slavery; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, which stated that all individuals who were held as slaves in rebellious states "henceforward shall be free"; and

WHEREAS, In 1864, President Abraham Lincoln was re-elected; on April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Army of Virginia, surrendered his forces to Union General Ulysses S. Grant and the war for all intents and purposes was over; and

WHEREAS, Five days later, on April 14th, President Abraham Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth, a Confederate sympathizer, at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.; after lying nine hours in a coma, he succumbed to his injuries and died the next morning, on April 15, 1865; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln's body lay in state at the Capitol before a funeral train took him back to his final resting place in Springfield, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit, imbued with a sense of compassion, and loved by the Nation as a whole, President Abraham Lincoln's life was a portrait of service and patriotism, a legacy that long endured the passage of time, and will forever remain in the hearts of all Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to

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memorialize the 150th Anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's death on April 15, 2015, and pay tribute to his many accomplishments; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the 1st New York Light Artillery Regiment Battery M Reenactment Group.