

2015-J3330

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the New York Memorial

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to recognize the rich history of the communities across this great State of New York and honor the individual and collective achievements of New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the 18th and 19th Centuries, American explorers had long searched for a water route to the west but the lack of an efficient, safe transportation network kept populations and trade largely confined to coastal areas; and

WHEREAS, At the beginning of the 19th Century, the Allegheny Mountains were considered the Western Frontier and the Northwest Territories that would become the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio were rich in various resources such as timber, minerals, and fertile land for farming; and

WHEREAS, A flour merchant named Jesse Hawley envisioned a canal from Buffalo on the eastern shore of Lake Erie to Albany on the upper Hudson River and published a series of essays which were published in the GENESEE MESSENGER describing the route, costs, and benefits of the Erie Canal; and

WHEREAS, Assemblyman Joshua Forman submitted the first State legislation for the Erie Canal in 1808 which called for a number of surveys to examine the practicality of a water route between Lake Erie and the Hudson River; and

WHEREAS, On March 13, 1810, then State Senator Dewitt Clinton introduced legislation to create a Canal Commission that would direct its commissioners to survey a route for the Canal which would connect the Hudson River to the Great Lakes; it was passed in the Senate that same year; and

WHEREAS, In 1816, as a sitting Canal Commissioner, Senator Clinton submitted a formal petition to a joint committee of the New York State Senate and Assembly to create a canal system between the Hudson River and Lake Erie; and

WHEREAS, This document, known as the New York Memorial, launched a series of public gatherings in support of the Canal's construction and began the statewide movement to build the waterway; and

WHEREAS, Over 100,000 New Yorkers would sign the petition accounting for nearly 10% of the State population at that time; and

WHEREAS, The proud heritage of the Erie Canal begins with the New York Memorial, which gave New Yorkers the opportunity to express their support for the Erie Canal project to their State Senators and Members of the Assembly, which led to legislative approval for the beginning of construction of the Erie Canal in 1817; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the New York Memorial.