

2015-K1122

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 200th Anniversary of Hamilton County, New York, on April 12, 2016

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to honor and recognize the distinguished histories of communities across this great Empire State, and to celebrate the people and places that make these communities strong; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Hamilton County, New York, to be celebrated with a myriad of public Bicentennial events on Tuesday, April 12, 2016; and

WHEREAS, For the past 200 years, Hamilton County has proudly stood as a close-knit, safe and vibrant community in the Adirondack Park region of northern New York State, the largest park in the contiguous United States; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County remained a wilderness long after New York State had divided into counties; it was formed from part of Montgomery County on April 12, 1816, as a provisional county and remained under the legislative control of Montgomery County until the late 1830s, since there were too few residents to form a government according to State law until that time; and

WHEREAS, In approximately 1840, Hamilton County became an independent entity with the county seat at Sageville, the present Lake Pleasant; however, even after it attained autonomy, the county was threatened with dissolution through annexation to neighboring counties several times until as late as 1930; and

WHEREAS, For over a century after its initial founding, it was not certain that Hamilton County would continue as a self-governing poli-

tical unit; however, despite the challenges of a perpetually sparse population, difficult climate, economic reliance on the unpredictable tourism industry, and general remoteness from more urban areas of the State, the county endured, making it and its steadfast residents a proven example of fortitude and determination; and

WHEREAS, The county's borders were adjusted on a couple of occasions; on April 6, 1860, Fulton County was partitioned, with 10 square miles of land in Sacandaga Park transferred to Hamilton County, and on May 24, 1915, land was swapped between Hamilton and Essex counties, with Hamilton County ceding Fishing Brook Mountain for Indian Lake; in the exchange, Hamilton County gained an additional 20 square miles; and

WHEREAS, The county is named after Alexander Hamilton, the only member of the New York State delegation who signed the United States Constitution in 1787; he later served as the first United States Secretary of the Treasury; and

WHEREAS, With a 2010 Census population of 4,836, Hamilton County is the least populous county in the State of New York; however, it has a total area of approximately 1,808 square miles, of which 1,717 square miles is land and 90 square miles (5.0%) is water, making it the State's third-largest county by land area; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County is one of only two counties in the State that lie entirely within the Adirondack Park and consists mostly of publicly owned "forever wild" Forest Preserve land; and

WHEREAS, The county is made up of nine towns: Arietta, Benson, Hope, Indian Lake, Inlet, Lake Pleasant, Long Lake, Morehouse, and Wells, and one incorporated village, Speculator, which was established in 1925, and is situated within the Town of Lake Pleasant; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County is governed by a Board of Supervisors, one representing each of the county's nine townships; each supervisor has a weighted vote based on the population of the town he or she represents; the weighted vote is recalculated every ten years based on census data;

and

WHEREAS, In December of 1941, days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered WWII and Hamilton County residents quickly mobilized for the war effort; with a population of less than 4,200 at that time, 432 Hamilton County residents left their homes to serve in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, During this time, the Hamilton County Red Cross Chapter provided food packages, nursing staff and assistance in countless ways; women were left with the monumental task of keeping the home front while also supporting the war effort; today, approximately 626 veterans reside in Hamilton County; and

WHEREAS, With beautiful mountains, trails, rivers, streams, and an estimated 77 lakes, Hamilton County's largest private employers are tourism-related facilities, including lodging properties, resorts, museums, historic sites, float planes, boat tours, and Nordic and Alpine ski areas; and

WHEREAS, In the summer months, the population of the county quadruples, from 4,836 to almost 20,000; seasonal residents out-number permanent residents 3:1; and

WHEREAS, Tourists admire the area's immense beauty, and are surprised to discover there is no permanent traffic light anywhere in the county; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County has continued its steadfast commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all of its residents, ensuring a safe, peaceful and educational climate for individuals and families to thrive; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Hamilton County to be celebrated on April 12, 2016, in order to recognize the significant role the county plays in the life of the community of the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-

mitted to William G. Farber, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors,
Hamilton County, and to Dr. Eliza Jane Darling, Hamilton County Histori-
an.