

2021-J2279

Senate Resolution No. 2279

BY: Senator OBERACKER

COMMEMORATING the life and accomplishments of The Honorable Alton B. Parker, one of Cortland, New York's most accomplished native sons

WHEREAS, New York State has long been the birthplace and home to great historical figures, men and women who, through their great personal and professional achievements, have furthered the causes of humanity, government, education, medicine, social reform and science; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the life and accomplishments of The Honorable Alton B. Parker, one of Cortland, New York's most accomplished native sons; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious occasion will be celebrated at the Cortland County Courthouse, upon which Judge Alton B. Parker laid the cornerstone, on its Centennial Anniversary, Wednesday, October 5, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Alton B. Parker was born to Harriet F. (Stratton) and John Brooks Parker on May 14, 1852, in Cortlandville, where a New York State historical sign marks the place of his birth; his parents encouraged reading and taught him the value of a good education; and

WHEREAS, Alton B. Parker attended Cortland Academy, and left to

teach at Virgil School and in Binghamton where he became engaged to Mary Louise Schoonmaker; he completed his high school studies and attended the first class at Cortland Normal School, now known as the State University of New York at Cortland; years later, the local school was named the Parker Elementary School in his honor; and

WHEREAS, After graduating, Alton B. Parker married Mary Louise and became a clerk at the legal firm of Schoonmaker & Hardenburgh; he then earned his law degree at Albany Law School of Union University, and practiced law in Kingston until 1878, as the senior partner of the firm Parker & Kenyon; and

WHEREAS, From 1877-1885, Alton B. Parker served as an Ulster County Surrogate; he was then appointed to the New York Supreme Court, and elected to the position the following year; in 1889, he was appointed to the newly formed Second Department of the Appellate Division, and in November of 1897, he successfully ran for the post of Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, During this time, Judge Alton B. Parker and his wife bought an estate in Esopus on the Hudson River, calling the house "Rosemount"; they were the parents of two children, Bertha and John, who unfortunately died of tetanus as a young child; and

WHEREAS, In 1904, Judge Alton B. Parker was nominated as the Democratic candidate for President of the United States; even though he was a strong contender, the popular incumbent Republican President Theodore Roosevelt was reelected; and

WHEREAS, Judge Alton B. Parker returned to practicing law, and served as the President of the American Bar Association from 1906-1907;

a few years later, he managed John Alden Dix's successful 1910 gubernatorial campaign and delivered the keynote address of the 1912 Democratic National Convention, which nominated Woodrow Wilson for President; and

WHEREAS, On October 5, 1922, Judge Alton B. Parker was given the honor of laying the cornerstone for the Cortland County Courthouse; 100 years later, on October 5, 2022, a plaque will be dedicated in recognition of the many accomplishments and good deeds of this remarkable man; and

WHEREAS, After his wife died in 1917, Judge Alton B. Parker married Amelia Day Campbell in 1923; three years later, at the age of 73, he died from a heart attack, and was buried in Wiltwyck Cemetery in Kingston; and

WHEREAS, A singular asset to all of the citizens he has served in the community of Cortland, and New York State as a whole, Judge Alton B. Parker's life and career are a portrait of preeminence in public service, and present a role model for all who aspire to a career in public service; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the life and accomplishments of The Honorable Alton B. Parker, one of Cortland, New York's most accomplished native sons; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the State of New York Supreme Court.