

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 225th Anniversary of New York State's ratification of the United States Constitution

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to commend the efforts of those who seek to bring full recognition of the history of this great Empire State, and in doing so, help to ensure that the complete history of our State and Nation is preserved and shared with the present generations of citizens; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 225th Anniversary of New York State's ratification of the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, On July 26, 1788, New York State ratified the United States Constitution in the Dutchess County Courthouse in Poughkeepsie; this is depicted on the north wall of the Poughkeepsie Post Office, a National Historic Landmark; and

WHEREAS, The summer of 1788 found the third Dutchess County Courthouse in the hamlet of Poughkeepsie as the setting for one of the most dramatic ideological struggles in state and national political history; and

WHEREAS, From June 17 to July 26, 1788, the New York Ratification Convention met to debate New York State's entry into the new republic proposed under the constitution drawn in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the previous year; proponents of ratification led by John Jay and Alexander Hamilton were in the minority; and

WHEREAS, Anti-federalists, led by Governor George Clinton, comprised the majority of delegates; they opposed ratification based upon the absence of provisions that would guarantee personal freedoms and clarify states' rights; and

WHEREAS, In a close vote of 30 to 27, the convention voted to ratify in "full confidence" that its concerns would be dealt with promptly, and the result was a stronger Nation, along with the Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, Failure to ratify could have brought down the fledgling nation; the ratification process took six weeks of protracted and difficult debate when the followers of Clinton and those of Hamilton were brought to a compromise through the diplomacy of Dutchess County delegate Melancton Smith; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 225th Anniversary of New York State's ratification of the United States Constitution.