

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Chemung Valley Living History Center upon the occasion of marking the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Camp Chemung

WHEREAS, it is the custom of this Legislative Body to commemorate significant events which represent turning points in our unique history and which are indelibly etched in the saga of our great Nation; and

WHEREAS, It is also the sense of this Legislative Body to commend the efforts of those organizations that seek to bring recognition to historical places within the State of New York and, in so doing, help to ensure that the complete history of our State and Nation is preserved to be shared with present and future generations of citizens; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concerns, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Chemung Valley Living History Center upon the occasion of marking the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Camp Chemung; this milestone Anniversary will be celebrated Saturday, May 3-Sunday, May 4, 2014, with a Civil War reenactment on the site of the camp in Elmira, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Chemung Valley Living History Center (CVLHC) is a non-profit group comprised of history and nature lovers, educators, living historians, and re-enactors who, 25 years ago, joined together with the common purpose of enjoying history; and

WHEREAS, For approximately 15 years, CVLHC's dedicated members have held two annual Living History events at the Newtown Battlefield State Park in Elmira, site of the August 29, 1779, Battle of Newtown during the American Revolutionary War; its season begins with the Ben Newton Memorial Civil War Re-enactment event, held the first weekend in May; and

WHEREAS, This year's Civil War Reenactment event is special as 2014 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Town of Elmira, as well as that of the Elmira Federal Prison Camp, also known as Camp Chemung; and

WHEREAS, Camp Chemung was a 40-acre prison camp for Confederate Soldiers during the American Civil War; established in May 1864 after the United States War Department learned there were vacant barracks in Elmira; by July 1864, about 700 Confederate prisoners were being transferred there from overcrowded federal prisons, and before the end of August they numbered almost 10,000 enlisted men; and

WHEREAS, Camp Chemung closed July 11, 1865; a total of 12,123 Confederate soldiers had been held at the prison, and 2,963 died of sickness, exposure, and associated causes; today, the camp flagpole is all that remains of the camp, and until the last decade most people living along the Pennsylvania-New York border had little knowledge of this facility that had played such a significant role in the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, CVLHC's remembrance of Camp Chemung's short but infamous existence includes Living History demonstrations of what life was like in a Civil War camp for soldiers and civilians; skirmishes and demonstrations of Union and Confederate Artillery and Infantry; and food and vendors representative of the period; in addition, the Ithaca College band will play the National Anthem as it was performed in 1864, and a 35-star flag will be raised on the original camp flagpole; and

WHEREAS, Events which symbolize the historical, social and cultural development of this great State and embody the principles upon which this Nation was founded should be recognized and celebrated by all the citizens of New York; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to express its highest admiration for the Chemung Valley Living History Center, and for all of the individuals who have worked to bring proper

attention to a place and time which merits recognition in the grand panorama of the history of our State and Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Chemung Valley Living History Center upon the occasion of marking the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Camp Chemung; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Chemung Valley Living History Center.