

BY: Senator MARCHIONE

COMMEMORATING the 50th Anniversary of the Chamber
of Southern Saratoga County on April 26, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize the achievements of those organizations which substantially contribute to the economic vitality of their communities and the entire Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County, to be feted at an Anniversary Celebration on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Clifton Park, New York; and

WHEREAS, For 50 years, the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County has diligently worked for its members, customers and stakeholders to create a successful business environment, provide valuable resources and to be a vigorous advocate for the business community; and

WHEREAS, The Chamber also seeks to become the leading resource for the development, growth and success of Southern Saratoga County and the entire Capital Region of Tech Valley; and

WHEREAS, By the 1960s, the predominantly remote farmland of Southern Saratoga County was quickly becoming a residential haven for city workers following the construction of the Northway; in 1967, the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Area Chamber of Commerce was formed as an outgrowth of the Halfmoon Business Club; the organization was officially incorporated in 1968; and

WHEREAS, During the 1970s, the area came alive with retail businesses to support the housing growth; the Town of Clifton Park became the hub of this growth in Southern Saratoga County with attractive settings to live and to do business; and

WHEREAS, The Chamber was instrumental in establishing a Clifton Park Post Office, and helped form the Shenendehowa School District from 10 small, some one-room schoolhouses in Clifton Park, Halfmoon, Malta and Mechanicville; today, the Shenendehowa School District educates almost 10,000 children and is the largest employer in Southern Saratoga County; and

WHEREAS, In 1972, the Chamber presented its first scholarship award to a local high school student planning to pursue a career in a business field; this scholarship, now named the Francis E. Almstead Memorial Scholarship Award, after a former Chamber president, is still given annually; and

WHEREAS, The first enclosed shopping mall, Clifton Country Mall, now called Clifton Park Center, was built in 1971 on the growing

thoroughfare of Route 146; other retail stores followed during the decade along with banking facilities and service industries; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, the Chamber opened its first offices in the Realty USA building at 1710 Route 9, a donation of office space, privileges and meeting areas; one year later, the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Area Chamber became the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce and a logo was designed incorporating the "twin bridges" on the Northway Route 87 signifying that the area was a link with the State Capital in Albany; and

WHEREAS, In the 1980s, a Hotel/Motel Committee was created to fulfill the need for lodging in the area, and the Chamber supported the expansion of the Clifton Country Mall and offered its first health coverage to members through Community Health Plan; and

WHEREAS, During this time, membership increased from 200 to over 550, and the offices were computerized and moved to the Key Bank building at the intersection of Routes 9 and 146 in Halfmoon; and

WHEREAS, The next decade saw even more growth in small businesses, and the Chamber's membership rose from 550 to over 765 by mid-decade; in mid-1996, the Chamber once again moved to a new location in Shoppers World Plaza on 15 Park Avenue; the new offices added additional meeting space, computer networking, website and e-mail capabilities; and

WHEREAS, Clifton Park had become a premier location for offices and professional and medical facilities, while the western end retained much of the original rural atmosphere; farms still dominated large segments of Ballston, Halfmoon, Malta, Stillwater and Waterford; and

WHEREAS, Between 1960-1990, the population of Southern Saratoga County grew from 35,085 to 84,960 residents; and

WHEREAS, The 21st Century brought many changes; in 2005, the Chamber rebranded its image with a new logo and website, and expanded their offices to include an Executive Education Center, a versatile training facility used by the University at Albany Weekend MBA program and available for rent by members; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, and again in 2008, the Chamber partnered with the Disney Corporation to bring the world renowned Disney Keys to Excellence Program to the Capital Region so that local businesses could experience the "business behind the magic"; also, in 2008, the Chamber staked its claim as a front runner in Tech Valley's workforce development initiatives with an event entitled: CLICK '08: A Summit Connecting Business and Education to Grow a Regional Workforce; and

WHEREAS, As 2010 approached, the Chamber and the region it served, stood on the edge of an economic explosion; the development of the Luther Forest Technology Campus and the addition of high tech companies such as The Foundry Company (a division of Advanced Micro Devices) added an exciting dynamic and economic prosperity to the region; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County continues to

promote, protect, and serve its members; and

WHEREAS, It is with great pleasure that this Legislative Body acknowledges this exceptional organization and its contributions to the local and State economies, fully confident it will continue to enjoy the sparkling success it has experienced thus far; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County.