

BY: Senator SEWARD

COMMEMORATING the 200th Anniversary of the Town of
Otsellic, in Chenango County

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to honor and commemorate the distinguished histories of the communities which comprise the noble body of this great 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 200th Anniversary of the Town of Otsellic, in Chenango County, New York; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious milestone will be celebrated with a myriad of events held throughout the year beginning with the debut of a special United States Postal Service cancellation at the South Otsellic Post Office on Tuesday, March 28, 2017; and

WHEREAS, On July 8, 2017, Town Supervisor Evan Williams and residents of Otsellic will gather to recognize their town's bicentennial at a birthday party at the NBT Bank; people are then invited to participate in a bus tour of the town with the town historian serving as guide; this will be followed by a flag raising, readings, a tree planting, and a community picnic, as well as a band concert by the Smyrna Citizens' Band; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Otsellic is situated on the north border of Chenango County, northwest of the city of Norwich; as of the 2010 census, its population consisted of 1,054 residents; today's population is about half of what it was in 1875; 356 households, and 259 families reside in the town; and

WHEREAS, The town is named after a river flowing through it, the Otsellic, which is an Oneida word for "place of wild plums"; the Otsellic Valley is the predominant geographic feature in the town, connecting it to the surrounding region north and south; and

WHEREAS, Around 1800, the first settler came to the area; other settlers, many of whom were from Connecticut, soon arrived, and the Town of Otsellic was founded in 1817, from part of the Town of German; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Town of Otsellic is comprised of several communities including Beaver Meadow, Mariposa, Otsellic, Otsellic Center, Rhode Island, Sandersonville, Seventh Day Hollow, South Otsellic, Stanbro, and Upper Beaver Meadow; and

WHEREAS, The South Otsellic State Fish Hatchery is one of 12 state administered fish hatcheries in the State of New York; the hatchery rears the entire statewide supply of tiger muskellunge, produces pond-reared walleye fingerlings, and rears small lots of wild, heritage-strain brook trout; annual production is 15,000 pounds of fish;

and

WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 38.0 square miles; over 10 square miles or about 7,000 acres are state-owned forest lands dedicated to the production of forest products and open to the public for forest-related recreation such as hunting, camping, fishing, hiking and cross country skiing; and

WHEREAS, The highest altitude is just over 2,000 feet above sea level along the south town line, rising from the lowest elevation of about 1,200 feet at the bottom of the Otselic Valley; and

WHEREAS, The Otselic River runs through the town and flows into the Tioughnioga River as part of the Susquehanna River watershed of Chesapeake Bay; and

WHEREAS, Formerly most of the land was in agriculture, chiefly dairy; since the end of the 19th Century, farm abandonment increased, and today, forest cover and early succession forest regrowth dominate the landscape, mixed with remaining dairy farms; and

WHEREAS, Logging has always been an important part of the local economy, utilizing high-value hardwoods for sawlogs, as well as firewood and softwood poles and pulp; and

WHEREAS, Hunting, trapping and wildlife-related recreation such as bird watching and wildlife viewing are important activities; during the summer breeding season, the Otselic area has over 100 breeding bird species, one of the highest numbers of breeding bird species in New York; bald eagles and osprey are seen regularly along the Otselic River, and ravens are repopulating the hills, reclaiming their historic range; and

WHEREAS, Remaining fruitful over the ebb and flow of decades of growth and change, the Town of Otselic continues its commitment to enhancing the quality of life of its citizens, ensuring a positive business, institutional and educational climate, and providing all essential services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Town of Otselic, recognizing the significance of the role it continues to play in the life of the community of the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Evan Williams, supervisor, Town of Otselic.