

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the 200th Anniversary of the Erie Canal Corridor during a "bicentennial Period" from 2017-2025

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that the quality of life of the citizens of the State of New York is greatly enriched by its exceptional governmental, cultural, educational and recreational facilities and institutions; 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 Erie Canal Corridor; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious event will span the bicentennial period from 2017-2025, representing the span of construction of the Erie Canal, from the groundbreaking in Rome in 1817 to its completion in 1825; and

WHEREAS, During 2017, cities, towns and villages throughout the Canal corridor will be celebrating their Erie Canal Heritage with historical society exhibits and community events; the state Canal Corporation will host three premier events in Waterford, at the canal's eastern terminus; Lockport, near the waterway's western end; and Rome in central New York, on July 22, where the "first dig" will be re-enacted, along with a symphony concert on the water, and fireworks; and

WHEREAS, After the New York State Legislature voted to build the Erie and Champlain canals on April 15, 1817, construction of the Erie Canal began in Rome on July 4, 1817; workers started first on the easiest, most level sections; and

WHEREAS, Sections of the canal opened as they were completed, until the entire canal from Buffalo, New York, to Albany, New York, opened on November 23, 1825; and

WHEREAS, The Erie Canal is America's most famous man-made waterway, stretching more than 500 miles across the full expanse of upstate New York; the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor encompasses New York's canal system and the communities that grew along its shores; and

WHEREAS, This Corridor spans across upstate New York, including the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and the Champlain Canals and their historic alignments, encompassing 4,834 square miles in 23 counties and is home to 3.2 million people; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize National Historic Landmarks within the State of New York, and in doing so, help to ensure that the complete history of our State and Nation is preserved and shared with present and future generations of citizens; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the Erie Canal's rich story and enduring contribution to the State of New York, this Legislative Body is proud to pay tribute to the Erie Canal on its 200th Anniversary; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Erie Canal in Rome, New York, on July 4, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.