

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the Masonic Care Community upon the occasion of their celebration of St. John's Day on June 24, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those fraternal organizations of high purpose and worthy accomplishment whose endeavors have faithfully served the welfare of the citizens of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the Masonic Care Community upon the occasion of their celebration of St. John's Day on Saturday, June 24, 2017; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious day will be celebrated at the Masonic Care Community in Utica, New York, which also serves as an independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing care facility for hundreds of residents who hail from throughout this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, The Masonic Care Community is the center diamond in a crown of properties owned and managed by the Trustees of the Masonic Hall and Home and the members of the Masonic Fraternity; and

WHEREAS, The effort to build a home for Masons, their wives, widows and orphans began in the mid-1800s; the Masonic Care Community opened its doors in May of 1893, as the Masonic Home; it was built with pride and purpose and, over the years, has been a safe haven and welcome place for tens of thousands of people; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Masonic Care Community is open to everyone and more than 500 elders call this first class facility home; the 400 acres are close to city services and area attractions, and offer the residents a safe and secure country setting complete with a pond, stream, woods and a variety of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, The Annual St. John's Day Celebration, this year is being held on June 23-25, 2017, will commence with a series of Family Day activities sponsored by Masonic groups in communities throughout the New York State, reaffirming their commitment to the values of family; and

WHEREAS, In April of 1864, the New York State Legislature officially recognized the Trustees of the Masonic Hall and Home as the body that would be vested with the title of the real estate of the Fraternity; they were empowered to build and maintain a Masonic Hall in New York City and use any funds generated to support the Masonic Home in Utica; and

WHEREAS, The Masonic Home, built in Utica due to its central location in the State of New York, opened in May of 1893 and within 30 years, expanded to include a building for 360 adults, a hospital, several dormitories for the children and a 200-acre working farm that

supplied all the food necessary for those who lived on campus, as well as products that could be sold to generate additional revenue; and

WHEREAS, This state-of-the-art health facility proudly offers an ever-expanding and updated continuum of medically-supervised care ranging from independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing, and includes rehabilitation, as well as palliative and respite care, reaffirming their compassion and caring for the health and well-being of our citizens; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the Masons of New York State have established and maintained one of the foremost medical research facilities in the world, The Masonic Medical Research Laboratory in Utica, recognized and acclaimed for its pioneering and advanced studies of genetic and biological causes of heart arrhythmias, reaffirming their commitment to 21st Century medical research; and

WHEREAS, Freemasons historically celebrate two annual feasts of Saint John; the feast of John the Baptist falls on June 24th, and that of John the Evangelist on December 27th, roughly marking mid-summer and mid-winter; and

WHEREAS, Historians believe that only after 1717, when the Mother Grand Lodge was formed, did Freemasons generally hold festival meetings on either or both June 24th and December 27th; and

WHEREAS, The first Grand Lodge was formed on June 24th, the feast day of John the Baptist in 1717; this may arise from a very old tradition, since John the Baptist appears to have been regarded as the patron of stonemasons in continental Europe during the Middle Ages; and

WHEREAS, The guild of masons and carpenters attached to Cologne Cathedral was known as the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist; the earliest surviving record of Grand Lodge of Ireland installing a Grand Master is dated to June 24, 1725; and

WHEREAS, Organizations of singular distinction such as the Masonic Care Community provide a model for enhancing the quality of life in the community and, as such, merit the grateful praise of the community of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that when events of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the Masonic Care Community upon the occasion of their celebration of St. John's Day on June 24, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Most Worshipful Jeffrey M. Williamson, Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York, and the Masonic Care Community in Utica, New York.

