

BY: M. of A. Miller MG

PAYING tribute to the Knights of Lithuania of the State of New York upon the occasion of celebrating Lithuanian Independence Day

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those who foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Lithuania has been a strong ally of the United States since its independence from the Russian Empire; Lithuania's sense of pride is unwavering; on two occasions over the last century Lithuania celebrated its Independence from Russia; and

WHEREAS, Lithuanians cherish their heritage; their struggle for independence has been one of determination; from the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795, Lithuanians had yearned for their own state; and

WHEREAS, Annexed by the Russian Empire, the Lithuanian peoples self-determination was on display during the November uprising of 1830, and again during the January uprising of 1863; and

WHEREAS, These uprisings were not successful but the idea of an independent Lithuania still burned bright in the hearts and minds of all Lithuanians; Europe was a hot bed of ethnic identities yearning for their own nation-state; and

WHEREAS, World War I stoked the flames of nationalism and Lithuanians felt this fervor; during the Russian Revolution, the Council of Lithuania was formed to discuss independence in September of 1917; the meeting of the Council furthered the cause of an independent state; and

WHEREAS, After months of deliberating, the Council of Lithuania proclaimed their Independence on February 16, 1918; this act was sent to both Germany and Russia, the two nations that had taken part in the original partition of the Polish-Lithuania Commonwealth in the 18th Century; and

WHEREAS, Russia, engulfed in Civil War, denounced its claims to the Baltic states in a time of internal strife; Germany, after deliberation, decided to accept Lithuanian Independence; this acceptance led to the formation of a new government within the new state of Lithuania; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to recognize those organizations and its members of true purpose and worthy accomplishment which provide opportunities to celebrate their rich ethnic flavor and who strive to preserve their cultural heritage; now,

therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to pay tribute to the Knights of Lithuania of the State of New York upon the occasion of celebrating Lithuanian Independence; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Knights of Lithuania of the State of New York.