

BY: Senator ADDABBO

COMMEMORATING the 40th Anniversary of the American Italian Heritage Association

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those organizations and individuals who foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of New York 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 40th Anniversary of the American Italian Heritage Association, the 10th Anniversary of the Museum being located in Albany, and the 5th Anniversary of the Cultural Center, to be celebrated with a Gala on Thursday, September 12, 2019; Ronald Canestrari, NYS Assemblyman from 1989-2012 and Victoria Graffeo, Associate Justice, NYS Court of Appeals from 2000-2014, will serve as Dinner Co-Chairs; and

WHEREAS, The seeds for the American Italian Heritage Association, Museum and Cultural Center were planted 40 years ago when, at the request of Philip DiNovo, eight professors gathered at the Syracuse University Law Department lounge to discuss the best way to preserve the Italian culture, ethnicity and history for future generations to cultivate; and

WHEREAS, The American Italian Heritage Association was chartered and formally established on June 12, 1979, in the Madison County Village of Morrisville, Town of Eaton, New York, with the expressed purpose and mission to record and preserve the blessed Italian heritage; Philip DiNovo is the first and current President of the association; and

WHEREAS, While Philip DiNovo was living in Morrisville, the largest Italian population was 30 miles away in Utica; he thought this would be the perfect place to begin building the first incarnation of the American Italian Museum; he found a former church in Utica's Little Italy section and this was the home of the museum for 13 years from 1985 to 1998; and

WHEREAS, For 32 years, Philip DiNovo was chairman of the department and a professor of Business Administration at Morrisville State College, then known as Morrisville Agricultural and Technical College; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, Philip DiNovo retired from teaching and moved to Albany; the artifacts he collected and displayed at the museum in Utica were moved with him and plans for a national museum began; the precious artifacts were mothballed in storage as the museum began a rebirth and took root at its current spot in the Town of Colonie; and

WHEREAS, Purchased in 2004, it took five years to restore the first floor of the building as the museum, which was opened after an 11-year

hiatus, on October 4, 2009; and

WHEREAS, The Cultural Center opened five years ago on August 21, 2014, after another five year renovation effort to bring the second floor of the structure up to building code standards; and

WHEREAS, An art gallery, memorial chapel, meeting space, library and classroom occupy the 1900 square-foot cultural center; Italian language courses, cultural genealogy and cooking classes are also offered at the site; and

WHEREAS, The American Italian Heritage Association is proud to honor its 2019 award recipients: Dominick Patrignani, Labor Rights Defenders Award; Thomas Nardacci, Business Leadership Award; Command Sergeant Major Tom Ciampolillo, Veterans' Bravery Award; La Rabinessa Liora Koen-Sarano Kelman, Religion Unity Award; Ron and Michele Riggi, Humanitarian Award; Professor Philip DiNovo, Public Service Dedication Award; Giovanni Virgiglio, Education Achievement Award; Terisina Cosma Mazzara-Boor, Arts Appreciation Award; and Ric Orlando, Culinary Arts Award; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when associations 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 40th Anniversary of the American Italian Heritage Association; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the American Italian Heritage Association.