

Assembly Resolution No. 694

BY: M. of A. Buttenschon

COMMENDING WOUR 96.9 FM upon the occasion of celebrating its 50th Anniversary on October 20, 2019

WHEREAS, The State of New York takes great pride in the success of radio stations and their ability to effectively communicate with a wide range of citizens and bring us together through the sounds of music; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend WOUR 96.9 FM upon the occasion of its 50th Anniversary to be celebrated with a concert at Utica Memorial Auditorium, in the Adirondack Bank Center, on Sunday, October 20, 2019; this event will feature members from both Blue Oyster Cult and Creedence Clearwater Revival in an act called Creedence Clearwater Revisited; and

WHEREAS, WOUR, which first aired in 1969 was in danger of being shut down due to its odd mix of oldies, jazz, christian music and news; and

WHEREAS, In 1973, a group of Syracuse University Alumni approached Rudy Bunkfeldt, owner of the radio station WOUR at 96.9 FM in Marcy, New York, and the group made him an offer, to play rock music and only rock music; and

WHEREAS, Jerry Kraus, who is affectionately known as The Doctor, started at the station in 1978 and had grown up listening to radio personalities from the original group which included Peter Hirsch, Tony Yoken, and Tom Starr; others such as John Bunkfeldt, the son of the original owner, and Jeff Chard, were behind the scenes; and

WHEREAS, WOUR's switch to a rock station was revolutionary due to the fact that, at the time, only a handful of true rock stations were scattered across the country in places such as Rochester, Chicago and Boston; and

WHEREAS, Four Acres in Utica, New York, was a popular venue where bands and musicians such as Peter Gabriel, Stevie Ray Vaughn, the Allman Brothers, Van Halen and the Doobie Brothers came to perform; the station hosted concerts at 96 cents per ticket in homage to the station's frequency (96.9); and

WHEREAS, In 1979, Four Acres hosted a concert led by an up and coming artist who went by the name Johnny Cougar, who had just recently put out his first album, later known by his full name John Cougar Mellencamp; and

WHEREAS, In addition, WOUR tried to give a voice to local artists by helping produce three editions of The Rock of Central New York, with live recordings and concerts featuring local bands; and

WHEREAS, In an era of frequent staff changes at various media organizations, WOUR has maintained a staff with deep ties to the station

and to the region and should be met with praise for being a pillar to their community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend WOUR, 96.9 FM upon the occasion of celebrating its 50th Anniversary on October 20, 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to WOUR, 96.9 FM.