

BY: Senator MAYER

MOURNING the death of Beverly L. Ouderkirk, renowned member of the New York State Board of Regents, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, There are certain outstanding members of our community who, through their selfless commitment and dedication, served to better the quality of life in our community and had a measurable positive impact on the lives of its residents; Beverly L. Ouderkirk was one such individual; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Beverly L. Ouderkirk, noting the significance of her purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Beverly L. Ouderkirk of Ogdensburg, New York, died on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at the age of 82; and

WHEREAS, With over 50 years of experience in public education, Beverly L. Ouderkirk was appointed to the New York State Board of Regents on March 10, 2015 for a five-year term effective April 1, 2015; she proudly represented the students, educators, parents, and communities within the 11 counties comprising the major geographic portion of the North Country; and

WHEREAS, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk served as an educator for 17 years in various elementary and special education classrooms in the Jordan-Elbridge and Weedsport Central School Districts, as well as for the Onondaga-Cayuga BOCES; she served as Elementary Principal, Director of Elementary Education, Committee on the Handicapped Chair, and Deputy Superintendent in the Gouverneur Central School District; and

WHEREAS, Furthering her career in educational administration, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk was Superintendent of Schools at Morristown Central School District, Tioga Central School District, and Valley Central School District before becoming a BOCES District Superintendent at Genesee Valley in Western New York; and

WHEREAS, Following her first retirement, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk served four additional districts as an Interim Superintendent over a 10-year period; the culminating activity of her long illustrious career was as a Shared Superintendent for the St. Regis Falls and Brushton-Moira Central School Districts, a first in New York State; and

WHEREAS, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk also served as a consultant to Boards of Education in Sodus, St. Regis Falls, Brushton-Moira, and Clifton-Fine, and as a mentor to new superintendents; and

WHEREAS, With a steadfast and unwavering commitment to the field of education, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk was also on the faculty of the

Western New York Superintendent Development Program and Mater Dei College; she participated in an International Coaching Program in the Washington, D.C. area, and led Strategic Planning processes through Transformation Systems, LLC in three school systems, including Genesee Valley BOCES; and

WHEREAS, A loving parent of three successful adult sons, foster mother to a child with disabilities, host parent to two AFS foreign exchange students, and grandmother to six unique grandchildren, one of whom is hard of hearing, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk viewed public education through numerous lenses; and

WHEREAS, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk graduated from Pulaski Academy and Central School District; she earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and her master's degree and a Council for the Advancement of Standards certification in Educational Administration from SUNY Oswego; she was also awarded a certificate extension for Special Education from Syracuse University; and

WHEREAS, While at Tioga Central, Regent Ouderkirk helped build a strong partnership with the various County Mental Health Services to better coordinate the services available and to develop improved crisis plans; and

WHEREAS, At Valley Central, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk sought and received Board support to create an Alternative Middle School off the main campus for students failing to experience success, students with high absenteeism, and students who had dropped out; with the assistance of the Director of Guidance, these students were identified and placed in real world work opportunities in the surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, The outcome of the program which Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk spearheaded was largely successful, turning around the trajectory of the future of the students being assisted by the new program into favorable and productive outcomes; and

WHEREAS, She was additionally successful in arranging a Cultural Education Exchange with a sister school in Russia for Morristown Central School, first hosting Russian students and then accompanying Morristown students for a two-week visit to Russian schools and cultural events in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Novgorod, including a stopover in Helsinki, Finland; and

WHEREAS, Largely involved in community activities, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk was a member of the Morristown Village Board, the Morristown Chamber of Commerce, the Morristown Public Library Board, and the Morristown Plein Air Festival Planning Committee; and

WHEREAS, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk's infinite selflessness and benevolence will shine on through her family's vivid and happy memories; her insight and strength will forever serve as a beacon of love, light and hope to the countless lives she touched; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of

compassion, Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing woman; she will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk, and to express its deepest condolences to her family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Regent Beverly L. Ouderkirk.