

BY: Senator KENNEDY

RECOGNIZING the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Ireland

WHEREAS, A century ago, on October 7, 1924, Ireland formally opened diplomatic relations with the United States of America when Ambassador Timothy Smiddy presented his credentials to President Calvin Coolidge; and

WHEREAS, Following the Irish people's long and painful struggle for independence, the United States was one of the first nations to recognize the fledgling Irish state earlier that year, and when Ambassador Smiddy emerged from the White House, he had become Ireland's first ambassador to any country in the world; and

WHEREAS, It was very appropriate that Ireland's first representative overseas should be dispatched to Washington, D.C.; while 1924 marked the beginning of formal diplomatic relations, the deep Irish-American connection already dated back centuries at that time; and

WHEREAS, Today, nearly one-tenth of Americans identify as being of Irish ancestry; Irish immigrants helped build the America we know today from the skyscrapers of Manhattan and the transcontinental railroad to our modern political system; and

WHEREAS, Irish people have made an enormous contribution to public debate and politics in America, from their local communities to the White House; more than twenty American Presidents claimed some Irish ancestry; the influence of Irish America extends well beyond the Oval Office and the United States Capitol to every state of the nation, most evident by the significant number of state legislators within the American Ireland State Legislators Caucus; and

WHEREAS, Since Timothy Smiddy's momentous audience in the Oval Office 100 years ago, a further eighteen Irish Ambassadors have presented credentials to United States presidents; over this time, Ireland's relations with the United States have evolved significantly; from an impoverished and internationally isolated state, scarred by years of conflict, Ireland has transformed over the past century into the economically prosperous and culturally vibrant peaceful nation of today; and

WHEREAS, This transformation is due to the support of friends in the United States, from the crucial role America played in brokering peace in Northern Ireland, culminating with the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, to the substantial American economic investment in Ireland; there are almost 1,000 American companies in Ireland employing over 200,000 people directly; our economic relationship is truly two-way as some 100,000 people are employed in the United States by over 650 Irish-owned companies across every state; indeed, Ireland is now the ninth largest

source of foreign direct investment in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The American-Irish relationship is a shining example of how ancestral ties, historical connections, cultural affinities, and shared values can create a foundation for enduring partnership and mutual prosperity; Irish American state legislators across the United States are playing a vitally important role in fostering this partnership and ensuring that it continues and flourishes for another century to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Ireland; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the members of the Irish-American caucus.