Senate Resolution No. 957

BY: Senator WEBB

COMMEMORATING the 150th Anniversary of the Broome County Fair

WHEREAS, Fairs and festivals empower communities to attract new visitors while capitalizing on local commercial and cultural value; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and support events of significance which contribute to the entertainment and vitality of the communities they serve and which exemplify the history and development of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Broome County Fair to be held Tuesday, July 22, through Sunday, July 27, 2025; and

WHEREAS, In 1858, the Broome County Agricultural Society was incorporated; in 1871, the Society's Board convened to arrange the first county fair to celebrate the agricultural bounty of Broome County; for the first three years, the Broome County Fair was held at the Johnson Fairgrounds; and

WHEREAS, For the next decade, the Broome County Fair was held in Binghamton, New York; in 1891, the Fair returned to its Whitney Point location which has been its home ever since; and

WHEREAS, Attractions at the Broome County Fair have varied widely, reflecting the evolving history of our country; in 1908, a balloonist was hired to make three ascensions with a parachute; in 1915, a barn-storming airplane came to Whitney Point, with arrangements with the Fair's officials, to take passengers for short flights, one of whom was the well-known opera singer, Julia Allen; and

WHEREAS, In the 1930s, public weddings were featured at the Broome County Fair; each couple was given $100 and flowers, and a minister was provided; in 1934, the Fair opened with a baseball game, pitting the Brooklyn Royal Giants against the nationally famous House of David; Grover Cleveland Alexander, a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame, and one of baseball's greatest pitchers, pitched for the House of David, attracting a very large crowd; and

WHEREAS, The internationally famous Captain Fox and his Rough Riders, New York State Police on horses, were an occasional attraction; for several years, truck pulls, tractor pulls, draft horse shows, demolition derbies, and horse races have been the main attractions; many famous entertainers have performed at the Broome County Fair throughout its history; and

WHEREAS, The facilities, including spectator stands, barns, ticket booths, and other buildings, have changed through the many decades the

Broome County Fair has existed; in 1909, the annual $350 lease agreement of the Fairgrounds was discontinued when the 31-acre parcel of land was purchased for $100 per acre; and

WHEREAS, The Midway was larger than ever by 1916; high wire, comedy, and aerial acts were featured that year; nighttime attractions were added in 1929; the Gillette Shows were introduced in 1981, remaining as a regular attraction; the following year, the first Special Kids Day was created to bring children with special needs and their support staff, 1,000 people in all, to the fair; this number has expanded to nearly 3,000; and

WHEREAS, The Broome County Fair has enlightened, entertained, and enriched the Whitney Point, New York, community, its residents, and its visitors for 150 years; many generations of participants and spectators have enjoyed the attractions and shows provided by the Broome County Agricultural Society; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those organizations which have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Broome County Fair; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Broome County Agricultural Society.