

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION congratulating twin sisters Gertrude LaGasse Gill and Katherine LaGasse VanBortel upon the occasion of their 100th Birthday

WHEREAS, Twin sisters Gertrude LaGasse Gill and Katherine LaGasse VanBortel, children eight and nine in a family of 11, were born on March 2, 1910; and

WHEREAS, They grew up on their parents' Wayne County 45 acre farm in Walworth, New York; the daughters worked in the fields along with the sons; they had no electricity and life was not always easy; and

WHEREAS, They played with fire log dolls and often wore matching dresses made by their mother; they have worked hard all their lives, appreciating the little things in life, working and raising their families and trying to live right and do right; and

WHEREAS, The lives of Gertrude LaGasse Gill and Katherine LaGasse VanBortel, fraternal twins, have been interwoven; they both went to business school, lived for years in adjoining houses, centered their lives on family and faith, and shared births and weddings, laughs and tears, and all the joys and sorrows that come with a long life; and

WHEREAS, Now they have shared yet another, though far less ordinary, milestone--the celebration on March 2, 2010 of their remarkable 100th Birthday; and

WHEREAS, Longevity, which can run in families, seems to run in theirs, but the odds against a pair of twins living to 100 are somewhere in the neighborhood of 40,000 to 1, according to a member of the Gerontology Research Group; twinstuff.com lists just seven pairs of living centenarian twins worldwide and Wikipedia lists only six; and

WHEREAS, While Gertrude LaGasse Gill and Katherine LaGasse VanBortel could not be together for their birthday, both marked it with cake; and

WHEREAS, Katherine LaGasse VanBortel has resided at the Wayne County Nursing Home in Lyons for the past five years; her immediate family gathered there to celebrate her very special birthday; and

WHEREAS, Still not quite believing she's 100, Gertrude LaGasse Gill, who lives at Parkwood Heights, an active senior living campus in Macedon, donned a birthday tiara and joined her family for a large party the weekend after her centennial; and

WHEREAS, Gertrude LaGasse Gill continues to live independently, gets around, has all her mental faculties, and says she'll shoot for 105; and

WHEREAS, Leaving home at 16 for business school in Rochester, Gertrude LaGasse Gill worked as a secretary until she married William Gill; her hobby was bringing up the kids and she loved baking and pets; and

WHEREAS, Katherine LaGasse VanBortel worked as a housekeeper, then went to business school and worked for a lawyer; she met her husband, Harry VanBortel, in church, commenting, when she turned 90, that "Somehow, he always seemed to squeeze into our pew"; they married in 1932 and remained together until his death in 1992; and

WHEREAS, As the sisters grew older and began families--four children for the VanBortels, three for the Gills--they and another sibling bought adjoining homes in Fairport, New York in Monroe County; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s, the VanBortels moved to Clyde, where Harry VanBortel had purchased a dairy; there, Katherine LaGasse VanBortel became active in the Clyde Methodist Church, the grange and Eastern Star, and avidly followed politics; and

WHEREAS, These exceptional centenarians, with their zest for life, have inspired and enhanced the lives of their families and friends; and

WHEREAS, These distinguished women, who have experienced the incredible joys and sorrows characteristic of and reserved for those with the

stamina and courage to savor a full life, have inspired the lives of

their many friends and family; and

WHEREAS, These beloved ladies have enriched the lives of those around them through their joyous and sincere love for others and through the quiescent charm and wisdom which comes only from a fullness of years; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize those who have reached such a remarkable age and who have witnessed and celebrated the innovations, cultural developments and awesome achievements of this country during the last century, while themselves contributing to the growth and excellence of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate twin sisters Gertrude LaGasse Gill and Katherine LaGasse VanBortel upon the occasion of their 100th Birthday; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Gertrude LaGasse Gill and Katherine LaGasse VanBortel.