

BY: Senator KENNEDY

COMMEMORATING the 90th Anniversary of the opening
of the Buffalo Central Terminal

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to commend the efforts of those who seek to bring recognition to historical places within the State of New York, and in doing so, help to ensure that the complete history of our State and Nation is preserved and shared with present generations of citizens; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the opening of the Buffalo Central Terminal; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Central Terminal was opened by the New York Central Railroad to the public for the very first time on June 22, 1929, and the first train to leave the terminal was the Eastbound Empire State Express; and

WHEREAS, The steel-framed structure was built in only two years, and features a 17-story office tower, a large concourse with ceilings more than 60 feet high, along with baggage and mail buildings and numerous train platforms; and

WHEREAS, The complex was designed to handle over 200 trains and 10,000 passengers daily, as well as 1,500 New York Central Railroad employees; the concourse featured shops, a restaurant, soda fountain, parking garage, and numerous other services; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, thousands of troops and supplies moved through Buffalo Central Terminal on their way to the front; and

WHEREAS, By 1956, the rise of air travel had led to a decrease in train use by the general public, leading the railroad to put the Central Terminal up for sale for \$1,000,000, just 1/14 its original cost; unfortunately, no buyers were found; and

WHEREAS, By 1970, New York Central's successor, Penn Central Railroad, had declared bankruptcy, with Amtrak forming the year after; Amtrak would continue use of the Central Terminal until October 28, 1979, when it was replaced by the current Depew Station in the Town of Cheektowaga; and

WHEREAS, The terminal was purchased in 1979, by Anthony Fedele, who maintained ownership until 1986, when the site went into foreclosure and was put up for auction; after another decade of decay, a group of concerned citizens stepped up and were able to secure the deed to the site, forming the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, the Preservation League of New York State selected

the terminal as one of seven most endangered properties; two years later, the necessary funds were raised to purchase the concourse clock for restoration; and

WHEREAS, Over the past two decades, the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation, on an all-volunteer basis, has worked hard to educate the public about the history of the Central Terminal and opened the site up for numerous public and private events including the annual Dyngus Day celebrations in Buffalo, which draws thousands of Buffalonians to the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, New York State and the City of Buffalo contributed funds to commission a study by the Urban Land Institute, examining the best ways to reactivate the Terminal as a public space, and in 2018, it was awarded \$5 million by the State for stabilization work and other improvements with a goal of readying the site for future development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Central Terminal's building and site are seen as symbols of the City of Buffalo and the work done by the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation is a point of civic pride for many Western New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to express its highest admiration for the Buffalo Central Terminal, and for all of the individuals who have worked to bring proper attention to a place and time which merits recognition in the grand panorama of the history of our State and Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the opening of the Buffalo Central Terminal; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation.