

BY: Senator HELMING

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of the James R. Hickey American Legion Post 120 of Palmyra, New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those patriotic organizations and individuals who devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the James R. Hickey American Legion Post 120 of Palmyra, New York; and

WHEREAS, The James R. Hickey American Legion Post 120's history can be traced to the beginning of the American Legion, when a group of 20 officers who served in the American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.) in France in World War I had an idea; spurred on by Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., they proposed an organization of veterans; and

WHEREAS, In February of 1919, this group formed a temporary committee and selected several hundred officers who had the confidence and respect of the whole army; the first organization meeting took place in Paris in March of 1919, when about 1,000 officers and enlisted men attended, including a representative from Palmyra, Dr. C.C. Nesbitt; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is a community service organization consisting of men and women representing nearly 15,000 American Legion Posts worldwide; these posts are organized into 55 Departments, one for each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines; Local Post 120 was also founded in 1919; and

WHEREAS, James R. Hickey was the first Palmyra man to be killed in action in World War I, during a battle in the Vale Sector, France, on August 23, 1918; another native son, Charles Beck was killed in action while Nelson Harmon and George Smith are reported to have died of pneumonia; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Post of Palmyra changed its name from Rear Admiral Sampson Post to James R. Hickey Post in July of 1921; apparently, when the young veterans met to organize, they used Admiral Sampson as a temporary name since he was Palmyra's most famous son of modern time, the "Hero of Manila Bay" from the Spanish American War; and

WHEREAS, In March of 1926, James R. Hickey's body was returned to Palmyra, and was buried with full military honors by the James R. Hickey American Legion Post; and

WHEREAS, The James R. Hickey Post Family consists of three separate

memberships: The Post (men and women veterans), Auxiliary Unit 120, founded in the 1920s, (wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters, etc.) and the Sons of the American Legion (sons, grandsons, etc.), was established many years later; and

WHEREAS, The focus of the efforts of the James R. Hickey Post 120 Family are to ensure the Four Pillars of the American Legion: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Nation Security, Americanism and Children and Youth, are always guiding their actions within the community; and

WHEREAS, Members of the American Legion assist their fellow veterans at VA hospitals and clinics, organize various commemorative events, and support numerous issues on behalf of interests of veterans and service members, including benefits such as pensions and the Veterans Health Administration; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous leadership of Commander David Borland, American Legion Post 120 hosts various events and charities aiding veterans and families with the best care possible; and

WHEREAS, The success of American Legion Post 120 is in direct correlation to the efforts of its members, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors on behalf of the organization and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, Today, American Legion Post 120 continues its dedication to fostering the traditions of patriotism, excellence, and commitment which have made our nation strong; it is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize the significance of their contributions and to note their worthy endeavors which have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the James R. Hickey American Legion Post 120 of Palmyra, New York, and to commend its members, past and present, on behalf of a grateful community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to David Borland, James R. Hickey American Legion Post 120.