Assembly Resolution No. 1052

BY: M. of A. Smullen

RECOGNIZING Herkimer, New York, as the birthplace of Basketball, Lambert Will as the game's inventor, and the Mohawk Valley as the game's principal influence in the game's initial adoption

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize truth when it arises from the ashes of historic controversy; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to recognize Herkimer, New York, as the birthplace of the game of Basketball, Lambert Will as the game's inventor, and the Mohawk Valley as the game's principal influence in the game's initial adoption; and

WHEREAS, The term birthplace is defined by Oxford dictionary as "the place where something started or originated"; and

WHEREAS, The recognition that Herkimer, New York, is the birthplace of Basketball versus it previously being accepted that Springfield, Massachusetts, referenced as the birthplace being historically inaccurate following a highly detailed investigation and subsequent analysis of the available evidence; and

WHEREAS, The recently released book **Nais-MYTH: Basketball's Stolen Legacy**, published by The Stryker-Indigo Publishing Company, Inc. in March of 2022, is one that resulted from thousands of hours of historic research, historic records analysis, direct interviews, and laborious chronological sequencing of events of all principal participants; and

WHEREAS, The book details that Lambert Will originated the concept of the game of Basketball while sorting cabbage for his mother by tossing them into two baskets in his mother's cellar based on historic record directly from Lambert Will and from a documented accounting by Glen S. Edwards, who attended the first game on February 7, 1891, and served with Lambert Will in the Spanish American War; and

WHEREAS, The book references detailed accounts from the 1951 Frank J. Basloe book titled **I Grew Up With Basketball** of Lambert Will, then volunteer Director of the YMCA, that he collected the two basketball teams referred to as the Herkimer Businessmen 9 and the Herkimer YMCA 9 to participate in the development of the initial rules of the game at the Herkimer YMCA, located on N. Main Street next to the Palmer House hotel, in the month of January of 1891; and

WHEREAS, The book references details from the Frank J. Basloe book of the playing of the first official game of Basketball at the Herkimer YMCA on February 7, 1891, between the Herkimer Businessmen 9 and the Herkimer YMCA 9; and

WHEREAS, The book references details from the Frank J. Basloe book

whereby William Levee of Little Falls was among those that attended the first official Basketball game played and took the game concept and basic rules back to the YMCA in Little Falls where they developed a Basketball team in February of 1891; and

WHEREAS, The book references details from the Frank J. Basloe book where it historically references the first inter-municipality game of Basketball was played between the Herkimer YMCA Basketball team, known to be the Herkimer 9, and the Little Falls YMCA Basketball team; and

WHEREAS, The book references details from the Frank J. Basloe book where it historically references the YMCA representatives of Utica, Amsterdam, Troy, and Albany obtained details of the game of Basketball from Lambert Will and developed teams in the later part of 1891; and

WHEREAS, The book references details of an Albany newspaper article that declares the Albany YMCA Basketball team played the Herkimer YMCA Basketball team declaring it to be the Basketball Championship of New York on February 21, 1892; and

WHEREAS, The book evaluates and concludes the pictures of the Herkimer Basketball teams that appear in the book and appear to have been taken during the 1891-92 and the 1892-93 playing season were authentic and represent the time period of play and the profile of the players common to both teams; and

WHEREAS, The book is effective in affirming the summary of all of the above activities of play within Herkimer, as well as between the various municipalities throughout the Mohawk Valley in an article that appeared in **The Sunday Herald of Syracuse** on February 20, 1898, declaring the formation of the official team in Herkimer in the fall of 1891, the loss of the championship by Herkimer to Albany in 1892, the participated play of 35 games throughout the Mohawk Valley and losing only two; and

WHEREAS, The book serves to dismiss any alternative view of the origin of Basketball in that its authors and researchers were unable to find any evidence to the contrary, including interviews with the Springfield College historian and the Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, The book raises concern about the authenticity of the promoted "original 13 rules of Basket Ball" that appear to have to scribed in February of 1892, which follows the date in which the rules were published in **The Triangle** publication on January 15, 1892, and were then later revised in the mid-1900s by an unknown person to suggest the authoring to have occurred in December of 1891, and what appears to be the fraudulent signature of James Naismith; and

WHEREAS, The Hall of Fame has since declared their lack of confidence in the authenticity of the original 13 rules of Basket Ball when quoted in the **Washington Post** March of 2022, article that covered a review of the newly published **Nais-MYTH: Basketball's Stolen Legacy** book; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that when it recognizes the truth when it arises from the ashes of historic controversy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize Herkimer, New York, as the birthplace of Basketball, Lambert Will as the game's inventor, and the Mohawk Valley as the game's principal influence in the game's initial adoption; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Herkimer 9, LLC.