Assembly Resolution No. 813

BY: M. of A. Buttenschon

COMMENDING Mike Hoke upon the occasion of his designation as Grand Marshal of the 2024 Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to individuals of true purpose and worthy accomplishment who work diligently to preserve and celebrate their rich cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Mike Hoke upon the occasion of his designation as Grand Marshal of the 200th Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 16, 2024; and

WHEREAS, In acknowledgment of this most prestigious appointment, Mike Hoke will have the honor of leading the Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 16, 2024; and

WHEREAS, The tradition of the Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade is steeped in 200 years of history, with John C. Devereux leading the first march down the Historic Brewery and Arts District of Utica; today, the Utica Parade draws around 30,000 spectators, as about 5,000 marchers from across the state step off from Oneida Square and head north to Genesee Street; and

WHEREAS, The committee for this year's Utica, New York, St. Patrick's Day Parade designated Mike Hoke as one of the highly esteemed Grand Marshals in recognition of his devotion and passion for the preservation and celebration of Irish culture in his community; and

WHEREAS, A long time contributor to the Irish community, Mike Hoke is a head of the Irish Cultural Center alongside wife Chris Hoke, in which they create, attract, and schedule Irish cultural events, lectures, presentations, and performances that promote Irish heritage and educate the community concerning the impact and contributions of the Irish people in the greater Utica area and beyond; and

WHEREAS, A testament to their resilience and ambition, Mike and Chris Hoke started the Irish Cultural Center with an empty room and no funding and assembled a planning team, raised funding, acquired sound and visual equipment, and booked speakers and performers to ensure a continuous series throughout the year, all while facing the constraints imposed by a world-wide pandemic; and

WHEREAS, For putting together an Irish cultural and educational series that engaged and attracted both presenters and attendees from as far away as Ireland, the inaugural Matthew T. Sullivan Irish Spirit Award was given to Mike Hoke in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Mike Hoke has worked for the Craobh Dugan branch of

Comholtas Ceoltoiri Eireann for almost 45 years, having joined in 1980; in 2008, he was inducted into the Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann Northeast Region Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Mike Hoke is a long-time and respected fiddle player, still teaching students every week, as well as introducing young and new musicians to the style of music; and

WHEREAS, Mike and Chris Hoke lead several trad sessions and performances each month throughout the Utica area, and they also host an Irish picnic at their home every August; and

WHEREAS, The two Grand Marshals have also been representatives from the Craobh Dugan O'Looney branch for the annual North America Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann CCE conventions; serving as President and Treasurer of their local branch, Mike and Chris Hoke have supplied funds from dues and performances to members to travel to North American CCE meetings, as well as attend various music and dance workshops; and

WHEREAS, Mike Hoke serves proudly as the Treasurer of the Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann Northeast Regional Board, and the Secretary of the Provincial Board; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Mike Hoke upon the occasion of his designation as Grand Marshal of the 2024 Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Mike Hoke.