

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the 200th Anniversary of Revolutionary War General Marquis de Lafayette's visit to Rome, Oriskany, Whitestown, and Utica, New York on June 25, 2025

WHEREAS, It is imperative of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor those patriotic and courageous individuals who have given so much of themselves in times of war for the advancement of the democratic ideals and principles of freedom which we have come to cherish and regard; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Revolutionary War General Marquis de Lafayette's visit to Rome, Oriskany, Whitestown, and Utica, New York on Wednesday, June 25, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Marquis de Lafayette was a French aristocrat and military officer known for his pivotal role in both the American and French Revolutions; he was a companion of General, and later, President George Washington and was a staunch supporter of the American cause for liberation from British rule; and

WHEREAS, At age 19, Marquis de Lafayette sailed to the American colonies in 1777, and secured a commission as a major general; the Frenchman played a crucial role in several key battles, including the Battle of Brandywine and the Siege of Yorktown, where his efforts helped secure American independence from Britain; and

WHEREAS, Marquis de Lafayette's contributions were not limited to America; after the American Revolution, he returned to France and became involved in the French Revolution, advocating for liberal reforms; he served in various military and political positions but faced challenges during the turbulent years of the revolution; and

WHEREAS, In 1825, Marquis de Lafayette was invited back to visit the United States by President James Monroe; the general was invited on a great tour of all 24 states at the time, and was regarded as "The Nation's Guest," and was met with great applause and high commendation among all the sites he visited; and

WHEREAS, Of the many locations Marquis de Lafayette visited were Rome, Oriskany, Whitestown, and Utica, New York; and

WHEREAS, At 68 years old, Marquis de Lafayette's stopped in Rome and then in Oriskany to visit with Colonel Gerrit Lansing, who fought under his command at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781; he then visited Whitesboro to visit with the widow of Hugh White, the founder of Whitestown in 1784; and

WHEREAS, During his visit to Utica, New York, Marquis de Lafayette was met with the celebratory sounds of booming cannons, bells ringing atop all the local churches, and approximately 5,000 citizens' cheers in honor of his valiant service and aid in American freedom from British governance; and

WHEREAS, Later, Marquis de Lafayette visits the home of Abigail Adams Johnson on Genesee Street; she is married to Alexander Bryan Johnson, a well-known banker, economist, and linguist from Utica; Abigail is the granddaughter of former President John Adams and the niece of the sitting President, John Quincy Adams; her father was Charles Adams, the second son of John Adams; and

WHEREAS, Following his visit to the Utica area, Marquis de Lafayette boarded a boat on the Erie Canal and headed for Frankfort, Ilion, Mohawk, Herkimer, and Little Falls; and

WHEREAS, Despite various challenges imposed by the French government and his participation in two revolutions, Marquis de Lafayette's legacy as a symbol of internationalism, freedom, and the bond between France and the United States endures; he remains a highly regarded and celebrated champion for American freedom whose legacy has enduring impacts so close to home for many New Yorkers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Revolutionary War General Marquis de Lafayette's visit to Rome, Oriskany, Whitestown, and Utica, New York on June 25, 2025.