

Senate Resolution No. 1654

**BY:** Senator MAYER

**COMMEMORATING** the 150th Anniversary of the Port  
Chester-Rye Brook Public Library

**WHEREAS,** It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those organizations of high purpose and worthy accomplishment whose endeavors have faithfully served the welfare of the citizens of the State of New York; and

**WHEREAS,** Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1876, the Port Chester Free Reading Room was founded, first housed in the Brundage Building on Main Street in Port Chester, New York; Jared Valentine Peck (1816-1891), a wealthy Port Chester lumber and building supplies dealer, who also served in the New York State Assembly and, ultimately, as a Representative to the United States Congress, donated the three-story building to the newly formed library; and

**WHEREAS,** The Brundage Building housed Lambert's Dry Goods Store on its first level, the library on the middle floor, and the Mamaro Lodge of Masons on the top floor; the income from the rents of the first and third floors supported the library during these first years; and

**WHEREAS,** On April 14, 1877, the library was incorporated as "The Library and Reading Room of the Village of Port Chester"; the first trustees were prominent Port Chester businessmen and clergy, led by Amherst Wight, a lawyer from Port Chester; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1920, the estate of Captain William Dixon Burnham granted a \$60,000 bequest to the library; the trustees decided to sell the Brundage Building and use the additional funds to build a new library; the Village of Port Chester supplied the library's operating budget, and the new name was Port Chester Public Library; and

**WHEREAS,** Construction of the new library commenced in 1925, and the dedication was celebrated on June 26, 1926; and

**WHEREAS,** By the 1960s, the library needed to expand to improve its service to the community; John W. Diehl, a member of the library's Board of Trustees, served as Board President until his death in 1944; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1963, a \$270,000 portion of John W. Diehl's estate was left to the library, providing the funds for a new addition, dedicated to his memory, which increased the floor space by 9,000 square feet; and

**WHEREAS,** In 2008, the Villages of Port Chester and Rye Brook entered into an inter-municipal agreement to fund the library's operating and

capital budgets; in 2012, the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library completed a major renovation, funded by yet another bequest from Port Chester residents, the late Douglas and Elise Lefferts; and

**WHEREAS**, The success of the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library is in direct correlation to the efforts of its members, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, unbridled enthusiasm, and uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors; and

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

**RESOLVED**, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library.