Senate Resolution No. 1782

BY: Senator MYRIE

COMMEMORATING the 150th Anniversary of the New York State Bar Association

WHEREAS, It is the sense 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 New York State Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Bar Association, formed in 1876, is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2026 after a century and a half of service to the State of New York and its residents; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Bar Association is the largest and most influential voluntary state bar association in the country and the most recognized and respected bar association in the world; the association boasts around 55,000 members, represents every state and territory in the Nation, and 2,500 members represent 100 countries worldwide; and

WHEREAS, In 1876, there was a general desire to form organized bar associations, and with the coordination of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, an organizing convention was held in Albany that year and a committee was formed to draft the bylaws of the new statewide organization; and

WHEREAS, At the 1876 convention, the New York State Bar Association developed its first mandate which remains today, "to cultivate the science of jurisprudence; to promote reform in the law; to facilitate the administration of justice; to elevate the standard of integrity, honor and courtesy in the legal profession"; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Bar Association initially included 356 members in its first year, which doubled to 800 members by 1892 and continued to grow to 26,000 members at its 100-year anniversary in 1976; by 2001, membership reached 70,000 members and peaked at roughly 75,000 members, membership has since declined to today's 55,000 members; and

WHEREAS, Countless leaders in our State and Nation have been members of the New York State Bar Association throughout its 150-year history, including United States presidents, New York governors, chief justices of the United States Supreme Court, chief judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and chief judges of the New York Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, After its official incorporation by the act of the Legislature in 1877, the New York State Bar Association was provided a

home at New York State's Old Capitol on State Street in Albany, New York, and was then moved to the current Capitol building upon its completion in 1883, where it stayed for 45 years; and

WHEREAS, As the New York State Bar Association grew, it moved into different office spaces throughout Albany, and in 1969, the association purchased its current home, "One Elk," which initially consisted of four townhouses at One, Two, Three, and Four Elk Street; and

WHEREAS, One Elk has undergone historic preservation efforts to maintain the historic 19th century facades, and architect James Steward Polshek boldly meshed the historic townhomes with a modern, brutalist extension behind the original buildings; perfectly placed between the New York State Capitol building and the New York Court of Appeals, the space now houses over 90 employees and hosts the 250-member governing body when they meet in Albany three times a year; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, the New York State Bar Association has influenced the outcome of many local, national, and global issues ranging from a dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela over a British Guiana boundary to the debate between codification and common law; and

WHEREAS, Through careful analysis and reports, the New York State Bar Association has provided their expertise and skills to weigh in on issues relating to international affairs, gun violence, wrongful convictions, solitary confinement, marriage equality, vaccines, artificial intelligence, and much more; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Bar Association has faced trials throughout its history, but it has remained steadfast in adapting to meet the needs of its members, the legal profession, and the public; the association will continue to expand operations and broaden its outlook to best fit the needs of present day; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Bar Association has and will always be a steady voice that provides analysis and guidance on prominent issues, the debates, decisions, and action of government, and the evolution of the law and our system of justice; and

WHEREAS, The importance of the New York State Bar Association was clear 150 years ago at its inception, and that importance remains constant today; then, as now, the New York State Bar Association remains a positive force determined to shape a more just society for many years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the New York State Bar Association; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the New York State Bar Association.