Senate Resolution No. 2140

BY: Senator STEC

COMMEMORATING the reinterment of 44 Colonial patriots at the Memorial Plaza at Lake George Battlefield Park on May 22, 2026

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor significant historical events and memorial observances which reflect the rich heritage of the State of New York and the enduring legacy of those who contributed to the founding of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, On Friday, May 22, 2026, the remains of 44 Colonial-era patriots and citizens will be solemnly reinterred at the newly constructed Memorial Plaza and Columbarium at Lake George Battlefield Park in Lake George, New York; and

WHEREAS, These individuals are believed to have succumbed to smallpox while receiving treatment at the Continental Army's military hospital established at nearby Fort George during the Revolutionary War in 1776; and

WHEREAS, Following their deaths, these soldiers and civilians were laid to rest in unmarked graves in what is now the Village of Lake George; and

WHEREAS, In February 2019, during excavation activities at a construction site on Courtland Street in Lake George, human remains were discovered both within excavated soil and in adjacent undisturbed earth, prompting local officials to immediately seek the assistance of state agencies, archaeologists, historians, and community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, Through a coordinated and respectful weeklong recovery effort involving local, state, and private entities, more than a dozen sets of remains were carefully recovered from distinct burial shafts, and over the following two years, more than one hundred volunteers contributed countless hours toward the continued recovery and preservation of additional remains from the excavated stockpile; and

WHEREAS, In total, the remains of approximately 44 individuals were respectfully recovered and transferred to the New York State Museum in Albany for scientific analysis, cataloging, preservation, and historical study; and

WHEREAS, Archaeological and historical evidence strongly suggests that the burial site was associated with the Continental Army's smallpox hospital at Fort George, making this discovery one of the most significant archaeological findings in the modern history of the Lake George region; and

WHEREAS, During the years following the discovery, the New York State Museum and collaborating experts undertook extensive scholarly

research, public presentations, and publication efforts to educate the public about the importance of the site and the individuals interred there; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the historical significance and sacred nature of these remains, officials and community leaders in Lake George undertook the planning and construction of a dignified Memorial Plaza and Columbarium at Lake George Battlefield Park to serve as the final resting place for these patriots and as a place of remembrance, reflection, and public education; and

WHEREAS, On May 20, 2026, a solemn ceremonial motorcade transporting the 44 caskets will depart from the New York State Museum in Albany and travel north along U.S. Route 9 through numerous communities, including Glens Falls and Queensbury, before arriving in Lake George; and

WHEREAS, The public reinterment ceremony scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on May 22, 2026, at Lake George Battlefield Park will provide residents and visitors alike with a rare opportunity to witness and honor an extraordinary chapter in New York's Revolutionary War history and Lake George's pivotal role in the birth of this Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the reinterment of 44 Colonial patriots at the Memorial Plaza at Lake George Battlefield Park on May 22, 2026, and to honor the memory, sacrifice, and enduring legacy of these early Americans; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Village of Lake George, the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, the New York State Museum, and other appropriate organizations and officials associated with this historic undertaking.