

BY: Senator WEBB

COMMEMORATING the 150th Anniversary of the Ross
Park Zoo

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that the continuing welfare of the citizens of the State of New York is greatly enriched and reliably served by the purposeful endeavors of those organizations within our midst that strive to enhance the quality of life in their communities by promoting wildlife conservation, science, and community engagement; 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 Ross Park Zoo located in Binghamton, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Ross Park Zoo is an organization that works to serve and secure a future where wildlife thrives and enhances the quality of life for citizens of its community and for its countless visitors over the last 150 years; and

WHEREAS, A wealthy businessman, Erastus Ross, who stipulated that the land was to be used as a park for all the community to enjoy, donated a 90-acre plot to the city of Binghamton, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Ross Park Zoo officially opened in 1875, and it is the fifth oldest zoological institution in the country; and

WHEREAS, The first electric-run trolleys in Binghamton were in opened in 1887, and a line running up Park Avenue by way of the old Washington Bridge created easy access to the park; and

WHEREAS, The increased use of the automobile allowed people to travel out of the Binghamton area for recreation, decreasing the number of visitors to the parks; the loss of this revenue caused the Ross Park Zoo to slowly decline until the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) threatened the zoo with closure; and

WHEREAS, In 1966, concerned community residents formed the Southern Tier Zoological Society, and for the first time in 1972, an appropriation for the maintenance of Ross Park Zoo appeared in the City of Binghamton's budget; the society was granted a contract by the city to oversee the operation and maintenance of the zoo in 1977, and has assumed additional responsibilities ever since; and

WHEREAS, With naturalistic exhibits housing over 100 different species, a strong emphasis on conservation education, and an outreach program that serves over 20,000 people in New York and Pennsylvania, the Ross Park Zoo is leaving a legacy that will last for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, In honor of its 150th year, the Ross Park Zoo has unveiled the America Together National Mural Mosaic, a mural made of 150 individually painted tiles to form a larger picture, in collaboration with the Mural Mosaic's Global Roots Project; and

WHEREAS, The Ross Park Zoo, with over 150 years of proud history and unrelenting commitment to advancement, remains today as a preeminent example of our understanding of, and appreciation for, the precious wildlife which comprises the bounty of nature and the beauty of our environment; this zoo has brought untold delight and expansive knowledge to a multitude of New York citizens and cherished visitors from abroad; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate the Ross Park Zoo on reaching the milestone anniversary of 150 years, and for its dedication to increasing awareness of the importance of conservation for the benefit of both the animal kingdom and the human race; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Ross Park Zoo.