

2023-J812

Senate Resolution No. 812

BY: Senator THOMAS

COMMEMORATING the 111th Anniversary of the
Roosevelt Fire Department

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to commemorate the 111th Anniversary of the Roosevelt Fire Department and to honor its past and present firefighting members for 111 years of fire protection to the citizens of Roosevelt, New York, and its surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, Fire departments are an integral part of community protection services in every locality of our State; during the past 111 years, the courageous and devoted firefighters of Roosevelt Fire Department have valiantly responded to all types of fire emergencies and have won the praise and respect of the community which they serve; and

WHEREAS, Organized in 1912, the Roosevelt Fire Department is comprised of five companies, currently housed in two stations: Alpha Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 the original company of the department organized in 1900, when Roosevelt was known as Greenwich; Paint Emergency Co. No. 1, organized in 1936; and Fire Police Company are housed in Headquarters at 56 W, Centennial Avenue, along with Hose and Engine Co. No. 1 while awaiting the rebuilding of their former quarters on Park Avenue and Hose and Engine Co. No. 3 which will celebrate their 100th Anniversary in May of 2023, is housed on Babylon Turnpike; and

WHEREAS, Roosevelt Fire Department once had an additional company,

Russell Hose Co. No. 2, which was housed at the current location of Freeport Fire Department, Hose Co. No. 2 on Leonard Avenue; No. 2 was organized before World War I, when the incorporated village of Freeport only extended as far north as Seamen Avenue; and

WHEREAS, After a petition for annexation was granted to the area North of Seaman Avenue in 1922, Protection Hose and Engine Co. No. 3 was organized to serve the southeast; and

WHEREAS, In 1923, Roosevelt Fire Department together with Hose Co. No. 5 of the Freeport Fire Department served the newly annexed area of the village; in that same year, Russell Hose Co. was dissolved, and their members disbursed among the new Companies based on where they lived, with Russell's firehouse sold to Hose Co. No. 5 as their first quarters; and

WHEREAS, The 18 charter members of Protection Hose and Engine Co. No. 3 built their own quarters at the current location of the Company on Babylon Turnpike; and

WHEREAS, Alpha Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1, also known as Truck Co. No. 1, was originally housed in their own building on Debevoise Avenue, prior to the building of Roosevelt Fire Department's prior headquarters in 1929; the current headquarters was opened in 2005, on the same Centennial Avenue site as the original building; and

WHEREAS, As the original apparatus room of Hose and Engine Co. No. 3's first firehouse became too small for larger engines, a new

cinderblock apparatus room was added to the original frame welding and opened in 1953, with the original converted into a much larger company meeting room; and

WHEREAS, On the eve of Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 1991, a fire that began with the audible alarm controls heavily damaged the original building, but fortunately, spared the apparatus housed in the cinderblock addition; the cinderblock apparatus room was subsequently found to be able to support a second story, so the original firehouse was torn down to create adequate parking, and an extended second story was added for new meeting and social rooms; and

WHEREAS, Currently, the Roosevelt Fire Department is comprised of approximately 44 members who are all volunteer firefighters or Emergency Medical Technicians; each Company has a captain and one or two lieutenants, who with the three chiefs constitute the leadership of the department headed by Chief Hector Tyler Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Over the years we have had many dedicated members, with our membership evolving as our community did; the first African American members joined in the 1960s, with our first black Chief James Barton elected in 1980; and

WHEREAS, In the 1970s, the first women firefighters joined, and in more recent years, many Latino members, including current 2nd Assistant Chief, Abner Vasquez; and

WHEREAS, Notable members in the Department's history include ex-Chief Lester Marks and firefighter John Rogers, who beside being knowledgeable active firefighters, were also Nassau County Police officers, and together, organized the Nassau County Police Department's Arson Squad; and

WHEREAS, Ex-Chief Daniel Markham, who became Nassau County's first black Fire Marshall, and Honorary Chiefs Bernard Von Elm of Emergency Co. and Aloysius Ansert Jr. of Hose and Engine Co. No. 3, who were both

elected as such for their long-term dedication and active membership well into their 70's; and

WHEREAS, Honorary Chief Ansert Jr. helped organize the New York State Volunteer Firemen's home's first Residents Council, and became its first Vice President; later, Hose No. 3 ex-Captain Allison Stewart become the first Chief of South Farmingdale Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, With a membership of dedicated firefighters, the record of Roosevelt Fire Department in public service and fire protection is one to be envied; for 24 hours a day, for 365 days a year, for 111 years, whenever the alarm sounded, these noble volunteers left their homes and went to the aid of their neighbors; and

WHEREAS, The brave firefighters of Roosevelt Fire Department are prepared to risk their lives every day to help save the lives of others and to protect homes and property from the destruction caused by fire; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the skill and devoted service demonstrated by individual firefighters, the Roosevelt Fire Department reflects the history and development of firefighting over the past 111 years; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body cannot express sufficient gratitude to those devoted individuals who recognize that the preservation of life and property is a sacred responsibility and who make that responsibility their own by serving as firefighters; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that we should give special recognition to those who work so assiduously for the betterment of their communities, and acknowledge publicly the heroic

good works performed by the volunteer fire departments of this great Empire State, their officers and auxiliaries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to proudly commemorate the 111th Anniversary of Roosevelt Fire Department; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Roosevelt Fire Department.