

## 2013-J2610

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the designating of a portion of a local road, state Route 375 leading into Woodstock, New York, as Levon Helm Memorial Boulevard

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those individuals who have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, The arts, in whatever form depicted, are central to human expression; they are truly a universal language and their contribution to the development of friendship and understanding among all peoples cannot be underestimated; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the designating of a portion of a local road, state Route 375 leading into Woodstock, as Levon Helm Memorial Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, Woodstock, New York, resident and longtime member of The Band whose distinguished music career spanned more than five decades, Levon Helm, died on Thursday, April 19, 2012, at the age of 71; and

WHEREAS, A brilliant musician and a beautiful soul, Leon Helm was a four-time Grammy Award winner and a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; he was an accomplished singer, drummer and mandolin player; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Levon Helm was a successful actor, acclaimed for his roles in "Coal Miner's Daughter," "The Right Stuff," and other films; his performance of "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" at the famous 1976 concert, "The Last Waltz" is preserved for posterity in Martin Scorsese's 1978 documentary film; and

WHEREAS, Levon Helm's musical career is among the most-storied in modern American music, filled with some striking paradoxes: The Band, with which he made the indelible mark for which he will always be remembered, took rock music back to its most distinctively American place,

yet he was the group's only American member; Helm was a rural Arkansan, and grew up in the Mississippi Delta, yet he embraced New York's Hudson Valley as his home; and

WHEREAS, Levon Helm won a remarkable three Grammy Awards in five years for albums: "Dirt Farmer" in 2007; "Electric Dirt" in 2009, and "Ramble at the Ryman" in 2011; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, Levon Helm was diagnosed with throat cancer and the famous voice with the rich southern nuances was silenced to a whisper; he still played the drums, mandolin and harmonica, often performing with his daughter, Amy Helm, also a vocalist and instrumentalist; a great emotional support to her father during this time, Amy appeared with him regularly at Levon Helm Studios; and

WHEREAS, Miraculously, Levon Helm's voice slowly returned; he felt comfortable enough to sing again live, and with imagination and vision, he conceived The Midnight Ramble Sessions, a series of live performances at Levon Helm Studios in Woodstock; named for the traveling minstrel shows of his youth, the first Midnight Ramble was held in January, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Levon Helm was very much a part of the Woodstock, New York, and Hudson Valley community; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body that the quality of life of the citizens of the State of New York is greatly enriched by its exceptional cultural, educational and recreational institutions, as well as the individuals of remarkable integrity and character whose endeavors have enhanced the quality of life for the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the designating of a portion of a local road, state Route

375 leading into Woodstock, New York, as Levon Helm Memorial Boulevard; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-

mitted to the family of Levon Helm.