

2013-J2795

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Children's Museum of History, Natural History, Science and Technology, Utica, New York, to be celebrated October 18-19, 2013

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who are devoted to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is also the sense 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; these institutions give positive definition to the profile and disposition of the communities of the State of New York and profoundly strengthen our society with their commitment; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Children's Museum of History, Natural History, Science and Technology, in Utica, New York; and

WHEREAS, To celebrate this auspicious milestone, the Children's Museum will host a Family Space Fest, featuring numerous events with Astronaut and New NASA exhibits and Mars Rovers and NASA Legos, to be held October 18-19, 2013; the event will also include NASA/Star Wars/Star Trek costumes and enjoyable door prizes; and

WHEREAS, One of the oldest children's museums in the country, the Children's Museum was organized in October of 1963 by the Junior League; originally called the Junior Museum of Oneida County, the museum began in the basement of the Utica Public Library, consisting of one exhibit, an Iroquois Longhouse which is still on display; and

WHEREAS, The idea of a museum for area children caught on quickly and the museum started to grow; in October of 1965, due to lack of space at the library, it moved to the former Department of Parks and Recreation Building at the Southeast corner of the Memorial Parkway and Oneida Street; and

WHEREAS, In its nine year stay there, the Children's Museum developed a variety of permanent exhibits and a large range of educational programs; interest increased steadily and by 1974, more than 21,000 adults and children were participating; and

WHEREAS, November of 1974 saw the Children's Museum move to the upstairs of the Valley View Country Club; this new location provided the needed space for the many exhibits, storage, and gift shop; one year later, the name of the organization was changed to Mohawk Valley Museum, and four years after that, in July of 1979, the museum was again relocated, this time to its current location in the historic Bagg's Square area; and

WHEREAS, The former John C. Heiber Dry Goods Building, at 311 Main Street, Utica, New York, was purchased; at this time, the name of the organization was changed to The Children's Museum of History, Natural History, and Science; and

WHEREAS, The five story brick building, constructed at the turn of the century, once drew visitors who came on the train from as far away as Albany and Syracuse to shop for dry goods; the interesting Romanesque Revival exterior remains as imposing as ever, and the charm of the period remains inside with its decoratively paneled central oak staircase, an original glass and wood paneled office, 14 foot high ceiling sheathed in fancy pressed tin, and loft windows; and

WHEREAS, For years, three of the five floors, approximately 6,000 square feet, were used for exhibit and program areas; in 2002, under the leadership of Marlene Brown, the mortgage on the building was paid off, the fourth floor was opened, and the name was changed to The Children's

Museum of History, Natural History, Science, and Technology; and
WHEREAS, In 2007, the Children's Museum was declared a New York State
and Federal Historic building; the location, near the ancient fording
place of the Mohawk River and the sites of Old Forts Schuyler and Stan-
wix, houses the only permanent exhibit of the history and origins of the
Mohawk Valley; and

WHEREAS, The Children's Museum is not only a place to discover, learn,
explore, play and be creative in a fun environment, it is a community
resource, where families, educators and community agencies come together
to help each child reach his or her greatest potential; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body that when organ-
izations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our
attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens
of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to
commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Children's Museum of History,
Natural History, Science and Technology, Utica, New York; and be it
further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-
smitted to the Children's Museum of History, Natural History, Science
and Technology.