

2017-J2877

Senate Resolution No. 2877

BY: Senator LITTLE

COMMEMORATING the Bicentennial Anniversary of the
Town of Minerva

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to honor and commemorate the distinguished histories of the communities which comprise the noble body of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the Bicentennial Anniversary of the Town of Minerva, in Essex County, New York; and

WHEREAS, Named for the Roman Goddess of Wisdom, Minerva was founded by Ebenezer West, an American Revolutionary War soldier, and his five sons; and

WHEREAS, On March 17, 1817, the Town of Minerva was established by an Act of the New York State Legislature; previously it had been part of the Town of Schroon, and prior to 1804, a part of the Town of Crown Point; until 1800, the entire town was a wilderness area inhabited on a seasonal basis by both the Algonquin and Iroquois nations; and

WHEREAS, In early 1800, Minerva was settled by many people from Vermont, and immigrants from Ireland; the West, Jones and Morse families

were some of the first inhabitants of the Town; and

WHEREAS, Through the 1800s, most of the early settlers were self-sustaining farmers; the population remained stable at around 1,000 residents until 1900, when it began to steadily decline; farms were abandoned and a population low of 505 was reached in 1940; and

WHEREAS, The influx of mining at Tahawus, during and after World War II, brought a growth spurt with the population reaching nearly 700 by 1950; according to the 2010 Census, the Town of Minerva was inhabited by 809 citizens; and

WHEREAS, Minerva is primarily mountainous and almost entirely forested; the Hudson River forms the southwesterly boundary of the Town, with 15 miles of its course being in Minerva or forming its boundary; approximately 15 miles of the Boreas River, the entire lower half, is within the town; these 30 miles of river are essentially wild and unsettled being surrounded by New York State land, which makes up approximately 75% of all the land in the Town; and

WHEREAS, Most of the settled portion of Minerva is in the southeasterly corner; this settled area is about 10% of the Town and was at one time entirely cleared; it has now mostly grown back to forest, including any old cellar holes and abandoned roads; and

WHEREAS, The cleared portion was once about 10,000 acres; today, about 1,000 acres are now occupied or cleared; the combination of natural and wild forest land with the man-made beauty of Minerva Lake and Donnelly Beach has made Minerva a popular destination for many tourists and locals; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Minerva has enjoyed some interesting history, including being the birthplace of Solomon Northup, an American abolitionist and the primary author of the memoir, Twelve Years a Slave; each year, the Town commemorates Theodore Roosevelt's journey from Newcomb through Minerva en route to the North Creek Train platform where he became President; the artist Winslow Homer spent much time at the Northwoods Club in Minerva, and some of his most famous works were painted here; the young Ruth Bader, later to become Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, spent her childhood and teenage summers at Camp Che-Na-Wah in Minerva; the internationally known educator, Ella Lynch, made her home in a house that still stands on New York State Route 28N; and Francis Donnelly, a descendent of one of the early Irish immigrants, served as Town Supervisor for 46 years, the longest serving Town Supervisor in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Today, under the luminous leadership of Supervisor, Stephen R. McNally, Minerva is the home to an excellent school, many churches, a community center and fire department, and numerous excellent restaurants and diners; and

WHEREAS, Remaining fruitful over the ebb and flow of decades of growth and change, the Town of Minerva continues its commitment to enhancing the quality of life of its citizens, ensuring a positive business, institutional and educational climate, and providing all essential services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the Bicentennial Anniversary of the Town of Minerva, recognizing the significance of the role it continues to play in the life of the community of the State of New York; and be it further

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

transmitted to Stephen R. McNally, Supervisor, Town of Minerva.