

2017-J5248

Senate Resolution No. 5248

BY: Senator GALLIVAN

COMMEMORATING the 200th Anniversary of the Town of Bennington to be celebrated on June 23, 2018

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 200th Anniversary of the Town of Bennington to be celebrated at an event on Saturday, June 23, 2018, in Wyoming County, New York; and

WHEREAS, In 1802, the land of Bennington was part of the Town of Batavia, Genesee County; in the summer of that year, John Tolles settled in the area known over the years as Hubbard's Corners, Danley's Corners and the "Beehive" in Bennington; and

WHEREAS, Three years later, Jacob Wright built the first frame barn in the township; by 1806, over 20 families were living in the town, and a tannery, shoe shop and blacksmith shop were erected; and

WHEREAS, In 1806, Chauncey Loomis purchased large tracts of land in the third and fourth ranges of the township at the price of one dollar

per acre, including all the land now known as Bennington Center; and

WHEREAS, By 1807, the first school house was built, and a sawmill was also built in the south part of the town near the Sheldon Town line; at this time, the road from Bennington to Sheldon was cut out and the first barn was built from wood produced from the mill; and

WHEREAS, Approximately nine years after the Loomis family settled in Bennington, Quartus Clapp set out to purchase his own land further west in the town; he selected a site four miles down Cayuga Creek near a waterfall and built a sawmill in 1816 or 1818; he purchased about 100 acres, which covered more than half of the valley of the hamlet of Cowlesville (at that time it was known as Clapp's Mills); and

WHEREAS, In 1808, land was taken from the Town of Batavia to form the Town of Sheldon; on March 6, 1818, the land of Bennington was taken from Sheldon to form the Town of Bennington; and

WHEREAS, Town leader, Quartus Clapp built a grist mill adjoining his sawmill in 1826, which was the first of its kind in the town; and

WHEREAS, In 1827, Gaius B. Rich came from Attica and established the first store in Clapp's Mills, which was run by Hiram Cowles; since the mail came to the store once a week for the local settlers to pick up, it is believed that Hiram Cowles had a great deal to do in establishing the Post Office at Clapp's Mills; on March 11, 1831, he was appointed Postmaster, and in his honor, the settlement received the name of Cowles viles; and

WHEREAS, John Fitch planted an orchard, and built a house and saw and grist mill in the current hamlet of Folsomdale which is three miles southwest of Bennington Center; in 1825, David Scott purchased the land

and began a mercantile and milling business in this area; the area was renamed Scottsville; and

WHEREAS, About 1831, Benjamin Folsom came to Scottsville to manage a store for David Scott; a few years later, David built a tavern which was later owned and operated by Benjamin Folsom and the hamlet was named Folsomdale; and

WHEREAS, The first Bennington town meeting was held in the home of David Farnham, and the first town supervisor was George Loomis; and

WHEREAS, On January 23, 1875, a meeting was held in Cowlesville with the purpose of dividing the Township into two towns; the board approved a resolution to create a new town on February 25, 1875; the new township was to be named Elmont; however, when the request was sent to the Legislature of New York State, there was some error in proceedings and the proposal died in Albany; and

WHEREAS, Until the 1930s, town meetings were probably held in the schoolhouse at Bennington Center; in 1936, the Works Progress Administration provided jobs in building projects for a long-range value; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Bennington built several small schools, and a town hall, which is still in use today; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Bennington also consisted of six covered bridges to span the Cayuga Creek; the last of the six, known as the Ellis-Chesbro covered bridge, was destroyed by fire on March 17, 1966; it was the last structure of its kind that existed in New York State west of the Finger Lakes; and

WHEREAS, Remaining fruitful over the ebb and flow of decades of growth and change, the Town of Bennington, under the luminous leadership of Supervisor Ellen Grant, 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 200th Anniversary of the Town of Bennington, 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 Ellen Grant, Supervisor, Town of Bennington.