

## 2017-J5251

Senate Resolution No. 5251

BY: Senator GALLIVAN

COMMEMORATING the 176th Anniversary of the signing of the Buffalo Creek Treaty between the Seneca Nation of Indians and the United States of America on May 20, 1842

WHEREAS, With due cause and proper resolve, this Legislative Body honors the Seneca Nation of Indians as it commemorates the 176th Anniversary of the signing of the Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1842; and

WHEREAS, A commemorative ceremony will be held on the historic lands of the Buffalo Creek reservation on Friday, May 18, 2018, at the Burchfield Nature Center, in West Seneca, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Creek Treaty ceremony is held annually to commemorate the signing of the 1842 Compromise Treaty that recognized and forever restored the Seneca Nation territories of Cattaraugus, Allegany and Oil Spring to the possession of the Seneca people; the event memorializes the significant agreement between the Seneca Nation and the United States government to respect and acknowledge the Nation's sovereign lands and affirm the Seneca Nation of Indians federally-protected treaty rights; and

WHEREAS, The Seneca Nation of Indians is a founding member and one of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy (also known as the

Haudenosaunee) who own and occupy aboriginal lands in New York State that were set aside by the Treaty of Canandaigua of 1794; and

WHEREAS, The Seneca Nation of Indians has a total population of over 8,000 enrolled members and currently holds title to multiple territories (Cattaraugus, Allegany, Oil Spring, Niagara and Buffalo) in New York State; and

WHEREAS, The construction of New York State's Erie Canal in the early 1800s - a water route linking trade and transportation between New York City and the Great Lakes - made nearby Haudenosaunee lands very attractive to land speculators and fueled removal threats against the Seneca Indians; and

WHEREAS, Eight years after the enactment of the federal "Indian Removal Act of 1830", five Seneca reservations remained: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Buffalo Creek, Oil Spring and Tonawanda; and

WHEREAS, Efforts to remove the Seneca people from their lands culminated with the signing of the notorious Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1838, in which all of the Seneca lands were sold to the Ogden Land Company, and the Seneca people were to move out west, to Indian Territory, in lands that are now the state of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, This treaty was notorious, even at the time, for being blatantly fraudulent as bribery, forgery, and deception were used to obtain Seneca member signatures; and

WHEREAS, Almost immediately, the Seneca people refused to abide by the treaty, and diplomatic efforts were made to negotiate a new treaty; and

WHEREAS, In 1842, a compromise treaty was secured, known as the Second Treaty of Buffalo Creek and laid the foundation for much of the Federal-Iroquois governmental relations throughout the 19th Century; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1842 saved the Seneca people the Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Oil Spring reservations; furthermore, it recognized and guaranteed the Seneca Nation and its people inherent sovereignty for more than one and a half centuries; and

WHEREAS, The Seneca Nation has a strong record of creating successful business enterprises in Western New York, employing over 6,500 native and non-native Americans, and generating over \$1 billion in economic growth and revenues to the western New York region; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 176th Anniversary of the signing of the Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1842 between the Seneca Nation of Indians and the United States of America; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Todd Gates, President of the Seneca Nation of Indians; Lenith K. Waterman; and to the Seneca Nation Council.