

2019-J218

Senate Resolution No. 218

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the 90th Anniversary of the Capitol Theatre in Rome, New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to those cultural institutions and organizations whose commitment to promoting the richness and diversity of the arts and entertainment world has contributed to the strength, vitality, and cultural enrichment of their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, it gives this Legislative Body great pleasure to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Capitol Theatre, celebrated at an event on Monday, December 10, 2018, at the historic theater; and

WHEREAS, The Capitol Theatre opened on Monday evening, December 10, 1928, as a joint venture by the M.E. Commerford Amusement Company of Scranton, Pennsylvania and Kallet Theaters, Inc., headquartered in Oneida, New York; the theater was designed by Leon H. Lempert, Jr., and was the first building in the city to be purpose-built as a movie house and the first to offer the new technology of "talking pictures"; and

WHEREAS, The opening program included "The Star-Spangled Banner," sung by Mrs. Arthur Seth Evans, two Vitaphone talking short subjects, a

medley of popular songs performed by Capitol Robert S. Bancroft on the custom-built Moller theater organ, and the feature film "Lilac Time," starring Colleen Moore and Gary Cooper; and

WHEREAS, The Capitol Theatre continued to operate as a first-run movie house until 1974, after which it was used on occasion for special events; a dedicated group of volunteers created the non-profit Capitol Civic Center, Inc., and the facility officially re-opened on its 58th Anniversary, December 10, 1985; and

WHEREAS, Today, in addition to the historic Capitol Theatre auditorium, which seats 1,788 persons, the Capitol Arts Complex serves as the centerpiece of the Rome Arts District, and the Capitol's main stage hosts a variety of programming, such as live stage plays, dance shows, classic movies, and special events; and

WHEREAS, The Complex also includes the two screen Cinema Capitol in a neighboring building, offering first-run independent movies 365 days a year, totally 1,400 performances; currently, under the luminous leadership of Executive Director Art Pierce, plans are underway to create a multi-purpose performance and rehearsal hall in an additional neighboring building, which will further increase the number of annual offerings; and

WHEREAS, The arts are the building blocks of civilization; they are central to human expression; they enlighten us and inspire the imagination; educational institutions, individuals, and organizations which further such worthy purposes richly merit the recognition and

appreciation of this Legislative Body and the people of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, As the Capitol Theatre looks back with great pride to its beginnings, viewing, with just satisfaction, its successful evolution, it renews both its dedication to supporting artistic excellence, and its commitment to the community it has served since 1928, expressing its appreciation to all those who have helped to sustain and enhance it over the years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Capitol Theatre; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Art Pierce, Executive Director, Capitol Theatre.