

Supporting the Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign

Referred to: The Economic Development and Tourism Committee (Chairman Maloney and Legislators Maio, Roberts, Loughran and Wishnick)

Legislators Dean Fabiano, Robert T. Aiello and Mary Wawro offer the following:

WHEREAS, the sovereign nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois or “People of the Long House”) lived sustainably in the region which now includes most of New York State for many hundreds of years before the arrival of European colonists; and

WHEREAS, in 2013 the Haudenosaunee together with their non-Native allies have chosen to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Two Row Wampum Treaty, the first agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and European settlers; and

WHEREAS, as part of this commemoration the Haudenosaunee call on all New Yorkers to act as good environmental stewards; and

WHEREAS, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy’s constitution, known as the Great Law of Peace, was first created on the shores of Onondaga Lake (in what is now Central New York) and eventually became a model for the Confederation of Colonies and the U.S. Constitution as recognized in the historical record and in Concurrent Congressional Resolution S.76 of 1987; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers and others in the wider region greatly benefit from the many contributions of the Haudenosaunee and other Native peoples in culture, environmental understanding, political philosophy and spiritual awareness; and

WHEREAS, the Two Row Wampum Treaty began what was intended to be a Covenant of Friendship, symbolized by a silver chain linking our peoples together through a series of agreements with the Dutch, British, French and the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Haudenosaunee have consistently and repeatedly sought to uphold the Two Row Wampum as the basis for relations among nations living in peace and friendship; and

WHEREAS, on September 13, 2006 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a resolution long-championed by the Onondaga Nation, which recognizes the “urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources”; and

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WHEREAS, despite the Two Row agreement, for centuries the Haudenosaunee and other Native people have been subjected to laws, activities, and actions to undermine their culture, spirituality, and way of life by ill-advised and intemperate government bodies; and

WHEREAS, such actions are beneficial for neither the Haudenosaunee nor the people whom such government bodies represent; and

WHEREAS, the Haudenosaunee and other Native people have persistently maintained their spiritual and cultural practices and in some cases their traditional governing structure despite long-term efforts to subvert those practices; and

WHEREAS, the Haudenosaunee have consistently sought diplomatic means to resolve problems with neighboring governments and people; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County and the Haudenosaunee can both benefit from a mutual collaboration and friendship to protect the environment on which we all depend; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County and the Haudenosaunee can both benefit from a respect for the culture, spirituality, and way of life of the Haudenosaunee and that of Ulster County while traveling on their own mutual paths through life; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature expresses support for the year-long Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign to Honor Native Treaties and Protect the Earth, and calls on the citizens of Ulster County, New York, to build positive and respectful relations with their Native neighbors and with all Native Peoples,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 20 NOES: 0
(Legislator Robert Parete arrived at 7:28 PM,
Legislator Mary Wawro arrived at 7:49 PM,
Legislator Harris left at 7:45 PM,
Legislator Briggs left at 8:30 PM,
Legislator Lopez left at 9:30 PM)

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Passed Committee: Economic Development and Tourism on June 5, 2013

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

This is to certify that I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster have compared the foregoing resolution with the original resolution now on file in the office of said clerk, and which was adopted by said Legislature on the 18th Day of June, 2013, and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 20th Day of June in the year Two Thousand and Thirteen.

/s/ Victoria A. Fabella
Victoria A. Fabella, Clerk
Ulster County Legislature