In Support Of State Funding For Belleayre Mountain Ski Center

Chairman David B. Donaldson and Legislators Berardi, Bischoff, Cahill, Dart, Distel, Gregorius, Kraft, Liepmann, Lomita, Loughran, R.A. Parete, R.S. Parete, Provenzano, Rodriguez, Shapiro, Sheeley, Stoeckeler, Terpening and Zimet offer the following:

WHEREAS, tourism is critical to the economy of Ulster County and Belleavre Mountain Ski Center plays a critical role in that tourism economy by attracting more than 200,000 a year, and

WHEREAS, Belleavre Mountain has the potential to attract even more tourists, most of whom cross the entire County on Route 28 to get there, and

WHEREAS, dozens of studies by public, private and government agencies over the last 50 years have identified Belleayre Mountain as the economic lynchpin of the entire region, which is economically depressed and in dire need of this economic catalyst, and

WHEREAS, it is one of the only major tourist attractions in the County pulling visitors in during the months of January, February and March, and

WHEREAS, it employs and creates employment for more than 1,000 people each year, and

WHEREAS, our hotels, restaurants, gift shops and other related industry rely heavily on the skier traffic created by Belleayre Mountain Ski Center, and

WHEREAS, the ski center was created on forever wild land in the Catskill Forest Preserve by virtue of an amendment to the New York State Constitution approved in 1974 by votes in the State and can never "be leased, sold or exchanged or taken by any corporation, public or private", and

WHEREAS, the voters of the State approved another constitutional amendment in 1987 authorizing an expansion of the State owned ski center, and

WHEREAS, investment of public funding in economic development is the legitimate business of State government because all residents of the State benefit from economic development initiatives, and

WHEREAS, the recreational needs of the citizens is a legitimate concern of government and Belleayre Mountain provides a four season recreation facility for citizens from all over the State, and

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WHEREAS, other ski centers in the region were developed more than a decade after Belleayre Mountain opened with the first chairlift in the State of New York because Belleayre served as an economic catalyst for them, and

WHEREAS, Belleavre Mountain must receive continued reinvestment if it is to continue to serve as an economic catalyst.

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature urges major investment in Belleayre Mountain Ski Center to expand it to the full size and scope authorized by New York State's voters in 1987, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the operation of Belleavre Mountain Ski Center be underwritten by the revenues it collects coupled with other State funds as may be appropriated from time to time to meet State and Federal safety mandates at the facility, and

[FURTHER RESOLVED, that the operation of the ski center continue to be undertaken from a "best practices" standpoint and not through political appointment or interference from other State, County of local political bodies, and]

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Eliot Spitzer, New York State Comptroller's Office, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Senate Minority Leader Malcolm Smith, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader James N. Tedisco, New York State Senators John J. Bonacic and William J. Larkin, Jr., New York State Assemblymen Kevin A. Cahill, Clifford W. Crouch, Peter Lopez and Thomas Kirwan, and the New York State Association of Counties,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED AS AMENDED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 32NOES: 0(Absent: Legislator Every)

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Legislator Shapiro motioned, seconded by Legislator Gregorius to amend the resolution to remove the 2^{nd} "FURTHER RESOLVED" as indicated by [] and double strikethroughs.

MOTION ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 32NOES: 0(Absent: Legislator Every)

Legislator Zimet motioned, seconded by Legislator Donaldson to amend the resolution to add to the "RESOLVED", "Ski Center" after Belleavre Mountain, as shown above.

MOTION ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 32NOES: 0(Absent: Legislator Every)

FINANCIAL IMPACT: NONE

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