

Proclaiming The Twenty-Sixth Of November As “Sojourner Truth Day”

The Laws, Rules and Government Services Committee (Chairman Heppner and Legislators Gavaris, Levine, Roberts, and Ronk)

Legislator Peter Criswell and Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Corcoran, Erner, Fabiano, Gavaris, Greene, Hansut, Heppner, Hewitt, Levine, Litts, Lopez, Maloney, Nolan, Petit, Roberts, Ronk, Sperry, Stewart, Uchitelle, and Walter offer the following:

WHEREAS, Isabella Baumfree, well-known as Sojourner Truth, was born in 1797 in the Ulster County town of Esopus; and

WHEREAS, in 1826, after enduring years of heinous and inhumane treatment, Sojourner Truth began her walk to freedom, with slavery officially ending in New York in 1827; and

WHEREAS, upon learning her son was illegally sold to an owner in Alabama, she took the case to the Ulster County Courthouse, becoming the first Black woman to initiate a case against a white man and win the judgment; and

WHEREAS, in 1847 she began traveling throughout the nation speaking to hundreds of audiences on subjects of abolition, women’s rights, prison reform and capital punishment, and became one of our nation’s leading voices for abolition and universal suffrage in the 19th century; and

WHEREAS, during the Civil War she recruited Black troops for the Union Army, met President Lincoln and fought for desegregation of military hospitals; and

WHEREAS, in the post war era she fought to make formerly enslaved people eligible for federal land grants; and

WHEREAS, Sojourner Truth’s passionate belief in equal rights for all made her an enduring role model for the reformers of the civil rights and women’s equality movements; and

WHEREAS, Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblyman Kevin Cahill announced legislation designating November 26th of each year as Sojourner Truth Day in the State of New York, with bill number S7341 being officially introduced; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 201 of 2021 adopted on October 5, 2021, the Common Council of the City of Kingston proclaimed November 26th as Sojourner Truth Day in the City of Kingston, and urged all residents to recognize that this is a day for people of all races, creeds and backgrounds to celebrate and come together in unity; and

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WHEREAS, pursuant to Ulster County Legislature Legislative Chamber Proclamations both November 26, 2020 and November 26, 2021 were designated as Sojourner Truth Day throughout Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature wishes to permanently commemorate the legacy of Sojourner Truth, our local hero and champion of equality and justice for all; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature hereby pays tribute to Sojourner Truth’s lifetime achievements and contributions promoting justice, freedom, equal rights and economic opportunity for all by proclaiming the 26th Day of each November as Sojourner Truth Day in Ulster County; and, be it further

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature hereby encourages swift passage by State officials of S7341; and, be it further

RESOLVED, the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan, Commissioner of Human Rights Tyrone Wilson, Governor Kathy Hochul, Assembly and Senate Finance Committee Chairs, and all Ulster County elected Assemblymembers and Senators,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 23 NOES: 0

Passed Committee: Laws, Rules, and Government Services on February 10, 2022

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

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STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is the original resolution adopted by the Ulster County Legislature on the 15th Day of February in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Two, and said resolution shall remain on file in the office of said clerk.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 17th Day of February in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Two.

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