

## 2013-J277

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating the opening of a new exhibit at the Rensselaer County Historical Society in Troy, New York, paying tribute to the life and stellar career of award winning actress Maureen Stapleton

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize events which honor and pay just tribute to illustrious individuals whose creative talents have contributed to the entertainment and cultural enrichment of the citizens of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to celebrate the opening of a new exhibit at the Rensselaer County Historical Society in Troy, New York, paying tribute to the life and stellar career of Troy native and award winning actress Maureen Stapleton; and

WHEREAS, The Rensselaer County Historical Society (RCHS) will open the new exhibit, "Troy is My Home Town": The Life and Times of Maureen Stapleton on Friday, February 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, The exhibit will focus on three main themes: Setting the Stage, Troy in the 1920s - 1940s; Maureen Stapleton's Career in Theater, Film and Television; and A Hell of a Life - Maureen's Legacy; utilizing the rich archival collection at RCHS, the exhibit will display historic photographs, playbills, and ephemera associated with the entertainment industry that existed in Troy in the early decades of the 20th Century; and

WHEREAS, In addition, a multi-media tribute hosted by WNYT's Benita Zahn, will feature moments of Maureen Stapleton on video, appearances by special guests, and readings from her most famous works by Russell Sage College students; and

WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton was born Lois Maureen Stapleton on June 21, 1925, in Troy, New York, the daughter of Irene Walsh Stapleton and John P. Stapleton; and

WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton, raised in a strict Irish-American Catholic family, never forgot her hometown, Troy, New York; her family home, 188 First Street, still stands and in October of 2012, a commemorative

plaque, paying tribute to Ms. Stapleton, was placed on the building; and WHEREAS, Ms. Stapleton often frequented Troy's many movie houses, escaping reality by entering into the world of Hollywood; countless hours spent watching the glamorous stars of the 1930s and 1940s ultimately led Maureen to her life's passion - acting; and WHEREAS, After graduating from Catholic Central High School in 1942, Maureen worked for the New York State Department of Labor and at The Watervliet Arsenal with the mission to save \$100, the dollar amount she believed would be what she needed to follow her dream; at the age of 18, she departed her home town for the glamorous lights of New York City; once there, she did modeling to pay the bills; and WHEREAS, In 1946, three years after leaving home, Maureen Stapleton made her Broadway debut in the production featuring Burgess Meredith of "The Playboy of the Western World"; that same year, she played the role of Iras in Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra" in a touring production by actress and producer Katharine Cornell; and WHEREAS, In 1951, stepping in because Anna Magnani refused the part due to her limited English, Maureen Stapleton won a Tony Award for her role in Tennessee Williams' "The Rose Tattoo"; and WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton played in other Williams' productions, including "Twenty-Seven Wagons Full of Cotton" and "Orpheus Descending" (and its film adaptation, "The Fugitive Kind") which co-starred her

friend Marlon Brando, as well as Lillian Hellman's "Toys in the Attic" ; and

WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton won a second Tony Award for Neil Simon's "The Gingerbread Lady", which was written especially for her, in 1971; later Broadway roles included Birdie in "The Little Foxes" opposite her dear friend Elizabeth Taylor, and as a replacement for Jessica Tandy in "The Gin Game"; and

WHEREAS, Though limited, Maureen Stapleton's film career brought her immediate success, with her debut in "Lonelyhearts" (1958) earning a nomination for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress; she also appeared in the 1963 film version of "Bye Bye Birdie", in the role of Mama Mae Peterson, with Dick Van Dyke, Janet Leigh, Paul Lynde and Ann-Margret; she played the role of Dick Van Dyke's mother, even though she was only five months and 22 days older than he; and

WHEREAS, Again, Maureen Stapleton was nominated for an Oscar for

"Airport" (1970) and Woody Allen's "Interiors" (1978); after being presented with the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for "Reds" (1981), she ended her acceptance speech with "I would like to thank everyone I've ever met in my entire life"; and

WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton won an Emmy Award in 1968 for her performance in "Among the Paths of Eden"; she was nominated for the television version of "All the King's Men" (1959), "Queen of the Stardust Ballroom" (1975), and "The Gathering" (1977); she also appeared in "Johnny Dangerously" (1984), "Cocoon" (1985) and its sequel "Cocoon: The Return" (1988); and

WHEREAS, In 1981, Maureen Stapleton was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame; she is one of just 12 actresses to have won the Triple Crown of Acting - an Oscar, an Emmy and a Tony; in that same year, Hudson Valley Community College, in Troy, New York, dedicated a theater in Maureen Stapleton's name; and

WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton and her first husband, Max Allentuck were the proud parents of two children, Daniel and Katherine, as well as two wonderful grandchildren, Alexandra and Max; Maureen's second husband was Playwright David Rayfiel, from whom she divorced in 1966; and

WHEREAS, Maureen Stapleton died on March 13, 2006, at her home in Lenox, Massachusetts, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to honor the memory of cherished citizens of the State of New York who distinguished themselves in their profession and whose talent, charisma and unique personality permeated all they did; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate the opening of a new exhibit at the Rensselaer County Historical Society in Troy, New York, paying tribute to the life and stellar career of award winning actress Maureen Stapleton; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Rensselaer County Historical Society.