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January 12, 2011

Honorable Members
The Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street - 4th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Honorable Members:

At the Common Council Meeting held on Tuesday, January 11, 2011, the following item was **ADOPTED** by the full Council:

(Item No. 72, Tuesday, January 11, 2011) **"City of Buffalo Support for War of 1812 Bicentennial Celebration"**

Please review the enclosed item, and address and file your comments with the Common Council, 1308 City Hall, by 2:00 PM Thursday, January 20, 2011. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at 851-5105.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Bray
Sr. Legislative Assistant

RESOLUTION

Sponsor: Mr. Golombek

Subject: City of Buffalo Support for War of 1812 Bicentennial Celebration

Whereas: On June 18th, 1812, the United States of America declared war on the British Empire as part of a plan to annex Upper Canada (Ontario) and all British territory in North America to the west, marking the beginning of what would come to be known as the War of 1812; and

Whereas: The Niagara Frontier was the most hotly contested battlefield of the War of 1812, with the Great Lakes and Niagara River areas hosting numerous land and naval battles; and

Whereas: December 2010 marked the 197th anniversary of the invasion and burning of the village of Buffalo by the British during the War of 1812, an act done in retaliation for the burning of the Canadian village of Newark, now known as Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., by American forces; and

Whereas: The City of Buffalo is working with bicentennial organizers to arrange for commemorative bonfires to be lit along the shores of the Niagara River every so often between December 2010 and 2013, the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, in order to commemorate the burnings of Buffalo and Black Rock by the British and Newark and Fort Erie by American forces. Event planners in Fort Erie, Ont. intend to hold similar events to promote community interest in the War of 1812 bicentennial; and

Whereas: The Historic Preservation Committee of the Black Rock/Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance has sent a letter to the Buffalo Fire Department, which has been filed with the Common Council and is currently before the Legislation Committee, stating that they are seeking \$5,000 in seed money from the War of 1812 Binational Legacy Council, a coalition that is promoting events tied to the war's bicentennial, to get this commemorative bonfire pilot program started on the American side; and

Whereas: Canadian government agencies and foundations have already provided approximately \$19.5 million towards staging a fitting cross-border commemoration for the bicentennial of the War of 1812. These donations will be used to fund projects such as a makeover of the Niagara Falls, Ont., Historical Museum; improvements to Fort George; new signs on the Niagara River Parkway; a visitor center at Old Fort Erie; a Legacy Council web site; and a first edition bicentennial map; and

Whereas: Unfortunately, the only U. S. governmental funding that has thus far been provided for the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration in Western New York has been a \$5,000 donation approved by the Niagara County Legislature and a recent commitment of \$15,000 from the City of Niagara Falls; and

Whereas: Dottie Gallagher-Cohen, president and CEO of the Buffalo Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau, has been quoted as saying that her organization has found \$25,000 to \$50,000 in its budget for marketing and promotion of 1812 activities; and

Whereas: The Great Lakes Seaway Trail has \$120,000 in federal funding reimbursements for costs associated with 100 new interpretive signs; production of a new War of 1812 guidebook and brochure; and related tourism promotions; and

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Whereas: In light of the historic role that Buffalo and the Greater Niagara Region played in the War of 1812 and the lasting impact of this international conflict on America, it would be unconscionable if the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York State and the Federal Government did not follow the lead of our Canadian neighbors, the City of Niagara Falls and Niagara County by appropriately funding the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration in Western New York.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

That the Common Council, in recognition of the importance of leading by example and the historic impact of the War of 1812 on our city, region and nation, intends to set aside a fraction of the money that is budgeted each year for Council Member's discretionary money, ideally in an amount of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 from each District Council Member, to provide funding for the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration; and

Now Therefore Be It Further Resolved:

That this Honorable Body respectfully requests that the Mayoral Administration similarly identify funding that can be used to support the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration; and

Now Therefore Be It Further Resolved:

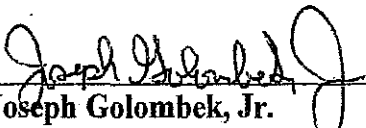
That this Honorable Body respectfully requests that the Mayoral Administration examine the possibility of including plans and recommendations for funding for special events such as the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration as part of the City of Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan; and

Now Therefore Be It Further Resolved:

That this Honorable Body respectfully requests that our partners in Erie County government, New York State Government and the Federal Government identify appropriate funding to support the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration; and

Now Therefore Be It Finally Resolved:

That this Resolution be referred to the appropriate Common Council Committee and forwarded to the Mayor, City Comptroller, Acting Corporation Counsel and our elected representatives in Erie County, New York State and the Federal Government for their review and comment.



Joseph Golombek, Jr.
North District Council Member