

No. R-325. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Speaker of the House and Brattleboro Town Moderator Timothy J. O'Connor Jr.

(H.C.R.260)

Offered by: Representatives Deen of Westminster, Burke of Brattleboro, Gannon of Wilmington, Hebert of Vernon, Long of Newfane, Mrowicki of Putney, Pajala of Londonderry, Partridge of Windham, Sabilia of Dover, Stuart of Brattleboro, Toleno of Brattleboro, Trieber of Rockingham, and All Other Members of the House

Offered by: Senators Balint and White

Whereas, Tim O'Connor, a lifelong resident of Brattleboro, graduated from St. Michael School, the College of the Holy Cross, and the Georgetown University Law Center and was a respected attorney in private practice, and

Whereas, his illustrious State legislative career began in 1969, and

Whereas, Tim O'Connor served on the House Committee on Health and Welfare and both as a member and as Chair of the House Committee on Judiciary, and

Whereas, in 1975, in an unprecedented event, the Republican-majority House of Representatives elected Democrat Tim O'Connor for the first of three consecutive terms as Speaker, and

Whereas, Speaker O'Connor served as the first Democratic Speaker since the 1850s, and he always presided with the utmost integrity, and

Whereas, his successor, former Speaker Stephan Morse, wrote that "Tim O'Connor's success as Speaker of the House was driven solely by his desire to get the work of the State of Vermont completed in a timely fashion" and that "he was not driven by personal or political motivations," and

Whereas, Tim O'Connor served as a model for House Speakers, with Speaker Michael Obuchowski remembering Tim by saying, "Tim overflowed with kindness, integrity, and interest in the common good at the podium," and "protected and respected the minority," and

Whereas, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders described the former Speaker as "a model for bringing people together," and U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy remembered, "Tim lived his life with a commitment to making a difference, and he did—in his community and in our state," and

Whereas, after concluding his speakership, Tim O'Connor, known to his neighbors as Mr. Brattleboro, wielded the gavel at Town Meeting for over two decades with fairness and equanimity, and

Whereas, this much admired civic leader died on January 16, 2018 at 81 years of age, and his survivors include his wife, Martha; children Kerry, Kate, and Kevin; three grandchildren; and a brother, W. Brian, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly expresses its ongoing admiration for former Speaker Timothy J. O'Connor as what an elected official should be, and be it further

Resolved: That the General Assembly expresses its sincere condolences to the family of former Speaker and Brattleboro Town Moderator Timothy J. O'Connor Jr., and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the members of the family of former Speaker Tim O'Connor.