

No. R-236. House concurrent resolution celebrating the historic Park-McCullough House as a cultural treasure in the town of Bennington.

(H.C.R.187)

Offered by: Representatives Campion of Bennington, Corcoran of Bennington, Mook of Bennington and Morrissey of Bennington

Offered by: Senators Hartwell and Sears

Whereas, attorney Hiland Hall was the son of an original settler of Bennington, a major local landowner, and Vermont Governor (1858–1860), and

Whereas, Trenor Park, also a leading lawyer, married Laura Hall, the daughter of Hiland Hall, supervised the mining interests of John C. Fremont during the California gold rush of the 1840s, amassing great wealth, and returned to Bennington where Laura and he constructed a luxurious mansion, at the then amazing cost of \$75,000.00 on 200 acres of land purchased from Hiland Hall, and they took up residence on Christmas Day 1865, and

Whereas, this grandiose edifice, which nationally known New York architect Henry Dudley designed in the Second Empire style, featured 35 rooms, a 75-foot-long central hallway, elegant entertainment rooms, a majestic staircase, a stained glass skylight, and technological wonders of the day such as gas lighting (requiring the installation of an automatic gas machine), central heating, and hot and cold running water, and

Whereas, continuing the legal profession and politics prominent through multiple generations of the Hall family, Trenor and Laura Park's oldest daughter, Eliza, married attorney and later Governor (1902-1904), John G.

McCullough, and in the early 1880s, after both her parents had died, she purchased her siblings' interests in the house, and

Whereas, the Park-McCullough House (as it became known), was extensively renovated in 1889–1890 in order to entertain more sumptuously 3,500 guests, including President Benjamin Harrison who visited Bennington to dedicate the new Bennington Monument at the time of Vermont's centennial in 1891, and

Whereas, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities describes the Park-McCullough House as one of New England's "finest and most significant Victorian mansions," and formal gardens and ancillary structures, such as a playhouse, also graced the grounds, and

Whereas, Park-McCullough family members remained in residence until 1965, and today the house, whose family furnishings and collections remain largely unchanged, is under the curatorial care of the Park-McCullough House Association which offers informative education programs and rents the house for cultural, community, and social occasions, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly celebrates the historic Park-McCullough House as a cultural treasure in the town of Bennington, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Park-McCullough House Association.