

No. R-98. House concurrent resolution honoring the life of Rutland native John Deere on his 207th birthday.

(H.C.R.71)

Offered by: Representatives Helm of Fair Haven, Howrigan of Fairfield, Batchelor of Derby, Branagan of Georgia, Burditt of West Rutland, Clark of Vergennes, Devereux of Mount Holly, Font-Russell of Rutland City, Hebert of Vernon, Higley of Lowell, Johnson of Canaan, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lewis of Berlin, Morrissey of Bennington, Myers of Essex, O'Brien of Richmond, Pearce of Richford, Peaslee of Guildhall, Perley of Enosburg, Shaw of Pittsford and Winters of Williamstown

Offered by: Senators Brock, Campbell, Flory, Giard, Hartwell, McCormack, Mullin and Sears and Westman

Whereas, the name John Deere is associated internationally with the highest-quality motorized equipment and other implements for farming, and

Whereas, although the company that bears his name is internationally known, John Deere's biography is not nearly so familiar, and

Whereas, Rutland native John Deere was born on February 7, 1804, and at the age of 17 he departed for Middlebury to begin a blacksmith apprenticeship, and

Whereas, after marrying Demarius Lamb in 1827, he and his wife relocated to nearby Vergennes, where he continued to pursue his trade as a blacksmith, and

Whereas, having moved to Grand Detour, Illinois in 1836, John Deere in 1837 created the world's first commercially successful self-scouring steel plow capable of operating in the tough midwestern prairie soil, demonstrating his mechanical creativity and laying the foundation for the company now known by his name, and

Whereas, although he was hesitant at first to abandon his life as a blacksmith, John Deere soon realized that plow manufacturing was a far more rewarding endeavor, and in 1841, his manufacturing facility was able to produce 75 plows in a single year, and

Whereas, in 1849, the partnership of John Deere, Charles Gould, and Robert Tate produced over 2,000 plows at its factory located in Moline, Illinois, and

Whereas, although his partnership soon dissolved, John Deere continued manufacturing plows, exercised leadership in business, civic, and political affairs, and was an abolitionist who actively supported the Union cause, and

Whereas, in 1864, he secured his and his company's first patent, which was for a "new and useful Improvement in Molds for Casting Steel Plows and Other Articles" and which would be followed by additional patents in subsequent years, and

Whereas, Deere & Company, the corporation that exists to this day, was established in 1868 with John Deere as president, and all the original stockholders were close family members, and

Whereas, under his leadership, the company continued to prosper, and in 1874, it introduced its renowned leaping deer trademark that is still in use 137 years after its creation, and

Whereas, in 2011, Deere & Company operates 11 sales and service centers in the state that supply high-quality products for Vermont's farms, homes, and industries, and

Whereas, although John Deere remained a resident of Moline, Illinois, for the balance of his life, his agricultural and manufacturing legacy deserves this legislature's special recognition, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors the life of Rutland native John Deere on his 207th birthday, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Deere & Company in Moline, Illinois, to the Rutland Historical Society, and to Rutland City Mayor Chris Louras.