

No. R-49. House concurrent resolution designating February 20, 2025 as NEK Day at the State House.

(H.C.R.40)

Offered by Representative Kascenska of Burke

Offered by Senators Beck, Douglass, and Ingalls

Whereas, the three most northeastern Vermont counties—Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans—represent a distinct region of the Green Mountain State known as the Northeast Kingdom (NEK), which should be treated distinctly, as its rural nature has unique strengths and challenges, and

Whereas, throughout the NEK, there are tremendous natural assets, with extensive forest tracts, mountain vistas, farms and cropland, and beautiful scenery, and

Whereas, the NEK is the least populous region of Vermont, but nonetheless contains 55 towns and goes and more than 60,000 residents who form resilient and vibrant communities, and

Whereas, the synergies of world-class outdoor recreation, including great trails, beautiful parks, the Nulhegan Basin Refuge of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, and the State's Kingdom Heritage Lands; a thriving food, farm, and forestry sector; and a robust creative economy enhance the NEK's economy and quality of life for residents and the many visitors attracted to the region, and

Whereas, there is a strong entrepreneurial spirit in the NEK, with growing resources for small businesses and remote work, a vibrant manufacturing and industrial sector, and many opportunities for expansion and growth, and

Whereas, among the outstanding educational institutions in the NEK are St. Johnsbury Academy, Lyndon Institute, Vermont State University-Lyndon, and Sterling College, and

Whereas, despite persistent economic and demographic challenges, including higher rates of poverty and unemployment than elsewhere in Vermont; climate change; and a shifting population base, the NEK moves forward optimistically with determination, collaboration, and an exciting sense of possibility, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates February 20, 2025 as NEK Day at the State House, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative.