

No. R-478. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 80-year history of the second Statue of Agriculture on the Vermont State House dome.

(H.C.R.404)

Offered by: Representatives Kitzmiller of Montpelier and Devereux of Mount Holly

Whereas, one of the distinguishing architectural features of the Vermont State House, the home of the oldest state legislative chambers in its original condition and still in use, is its historic Renaissance-revival dome, and

Whereas, the dome was built entirely of wood in 1858–1859, covered in copper, and painted red throughout the 19th century, and

Whereas, the first 23.44K gold leaf gilding of the dome occurred in 1906, and the gilding process was repeated periodically, most recently in 1976, and

Whereas, in May, 2018, the State House dome will be covered in scaffolding as part of a major renovation project, including a new regilding of the dome with 23.75K gold leaf, and

Whereas, in 1858, Brattleboro sculptor Larkin Goldsmith Mead created a wooden Statue of Agriculture for placement on the dome of the then new third Vermont State House, and

Whereas, this statue stood atop the dome from 1858 until 1938 when it was brought down in rotted pieces, and

Whereas, in 1938, Sergeant at Arms Dwight Dwinell, then 83 years of age, volunteered to recreate the original Statue of Agriculture, carving the head himself at a workbench in the rear of the State House, and he welcomed the assistance of two other Montpelier woodworkers to carve the body of the statue, and

Whereas, Dwight Dwinell named the new statue Ceres II, and installed it on top of the dome with the use of a crane, and

Whereas, constructed of Ponderosa pine, the 1938 statue remained in place until its removal from its perch on the dome on April 2, 2018, matching the 80-year reign of the first Statue of Agriculture, and

Whereas, outdoor exposure will no longer damage the 1938 statue as it is being conserved and prepared for indoor display at the Vermont Historical Society's Vermont History Museum in Montpelier, and

Whereas, a new, third wooden Statue of Agriculture will be carved to replicate the Mead original and will be installed as part of the dome project's completion in the fall of 2018, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly commemorates the 80-year history of the second Statue of Agriculture on the Vermont State House dome, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier and to the Curator of State Buildings.