

STATE OF MICHIGAN



MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 580

Offered by Representative H. Lynn Jondahl

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF TRIBUTE TO JOHN S. DEMARTELLY

WHEREAS, It is a rare privilege to extend the highest tribute to John S. deMartelly, artist-in-residence at Michigan State University, in praise of his rich and sensitive portrait of Chief Okemos, one of Michigan's greatest Indian Chiefs; and

WHEREAS, Commissioned by the Capitol Savings and Loan Association for its Okemos branch office, the painting depicts O-Ke-Monse, celebrated Chief of the Saganings and the Chippewas, who was born circa 1758 and died a century later. Done in oils, the painting will be unveiled for public viewing on May 17, 1976; and

WHEREAS, Though the battle for the future of his tribes and their land was lost, and he died a disillusioned man, Chief Okemos is portrayed in all the glory of his younger years, as a brave and cunning man who stood for almost a century at the head of his people against a relentless foe; and

WHEREAS, In the painting, Chief Okemos is attired in the coat of a Colonial officer, symbolizing the Chief's good trading instincts. With him is a formidable war club, painted blue and studded with a Chippewa or Ottawa design. He carries with him his favorite bone-handled, English hunting knife. The artist has painted him against a background reflecting the colorful, yet turbulent sky of a late Michigan autumn; and

WHEREAS, John S. deMartelly came to Michigan State College in 1943, and was named artist-in-residence in 1946 by former MSC President John Hannah. Best known for his work as a lithographer, he spent several years as the head of the Kansas City Art Institute, where he met the famous American painter Thomas Hart Benton, who became his patron; and

WHEREAS, On display throughout the world, the art works of Mr. deMartelly are magnificent reflections of the artist's brilliance and depth as a person and as a creator of beauty and inspiration. Indeed, in 1972, he was presented an honorary fine arts medal from the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters. He also received the Distinguished Professor Award from MSU; and

WHEREAS, The beautiful character of John deMartelly is apparent in his words describing Chief Okemos, the subject of his portrait: "A powerful Chieftan--a man of exceptional courage--a wise leader of his people and indeed a Chief to contend with--I wish him well forever"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (the Senate concurring), That the highest accolade be accorded John S. deMartelly, in praise of his portrait of Chief Okemos; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this tribute be transmitted to Mr. deMartelly, to Michigan State University, and to Capitol Savings and Loan Association, in testimony to the high esteem held for Mr. deMartelly's artistic accomplishment by the Michigan Legislature.

Adopted by the House of Representatives, May 11, 1976

Adopted by the Senate, May 12, 1976

Billie S. Farnum
SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

W. H. Thatcher
CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

