

SCR4002-A concurrent resolution designating Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere as Poet Laureate of North Dakota

WHEREAS, Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere was born in 1951 on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation where she lived until her family relocated to Oregon, began writing poetry at the age of 10 having her first poem published, and continued writing throughout high school, having poems published in Franklin High School's anthology "The Conceited Scribbler"; and

Denise's spiritual journey was founded in writing about traumatic childhood experiences, enabling a resiliency which allowed her to turn that poetry into stories of hope and healing for others.

WHEREAS, Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere returned to North Dakota in 1972 to complete her teaching degree at the University of North Dakota and later completed her master's and doctorate degrees from the University of North Dakota; and

During this time, Denise spent time with children, sharing and teaching through writing and oral lessons both academic curriculum and the Native American traditions, opening the view of young learners to a diverse landscape in which they were a part.

WHEREAS, Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere is the editor of the Turtle Mountain Teen Writers book of poetry titled "Heart of the Turtle"; and has published four books of poetry, "Dragonfly Dance", "His Feathers Were Chains", "Bitter Tears", and "Thunderbird"; a children's book, "Josie Dances"; and an academic book, "Stringing Rosaries: The History, The Unforgivable, and the Healing of Northern Plains American Indian Boarding School Survivors"; and

These books together present a powerful voice emanating in the world, one that reaches the soul of humanity. Separately, as we read, hearts become broken, laughter echos causing cheeks to ache, minds resound with Why? Why? Why? and we become entranced.

WHEREAS, Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere's books have received the North Dakota State Library Association Notable Documents Award, Independent Book Publishers Benjamin Franklin Award, Independent Press Awards, and Midwest Book Awards, and have been nominated for the Minnesota Youth Reading Star of the North Award and the prestigious Stubbendieck Great Plains Distinguished Book Prize; and

North Dakota literary minds have acknowledged Dr. Lajimodiere and her collective work through awards presented in the past. That is no small achievement. Denise's writing encompasses a diversity of thought reflecting the differing landscapes and cultures of North Dakota. Within that we sense the love/hate relationship with the beautiful snow and the damaging accompanying

cold and wind chill, an element almost intolerable for Denise, but yet she stays because of that call to her homeland and the people of North Dakota.

WHEREAS, Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere's poem, "Tawkwaymenahnah", has been adopted by Carnegie Learning's language arts basal textbook for grades 6 through 12; and

The positive impact of Dr. Lajimodiere's research and writing that is used in teaching in schools to diverse populations of children is widespread and our world is better for that.

WHEREAS, Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere is considered a national expert on American Indian boarding schools and has given over 50 television, radio, and podcast interviews and has been the invited speaker at numerous conferences, including Concordia Social Justice Advocates Conference, Guest Lecture at Verizon, National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts, National Native American Boarding School Healing Conference, Northern Great Plains History Conference, and the Midwest Law Enforcement Administrative Support

The life work researching Indian Boarding Schools and all that implies has resulted in world-wide recognition for this outstanding poet/writer. Her poem "North Dakota" captures a meaning for us not always understood, but there, nonetheless. This poet writes this 'other' North Dakota poem and you know she is Poet Laureate.

"North Dakota on a Sunny Thirty below Zero Day"
Kookum, with smiling eyes,
Says to my daughter gazing
In awe at the rainbow sun dogs,
Crystalline and brilliant against the cobalt sky,
*It's so cold, even the sun
Has ear muffs on!*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE CONCURRING THEREIN:

That Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere of Belcourt, North Dakota, is designated and shall serve as Poet Laureate of North Dakota until a successor is named by the Legislative Assembly; and

Please support and name Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere-Poet Laureate of North Dakota. **YES!YES!YES!**