

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Independence of St. Kitts and Nevis

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay just tribute to the cultural heritage of the ethnic groups which comprise and contribute to the richness and diversity of the community of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in keeping with its time-honored traditions, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Independence of St. Kitts and Nevis; and

WHEREAS, The people of this great State and nation and St. Kitts and Nevis enjoy a deep and abiding relationship rooted in kinship and culture; and

WHEREAS, The smallest nation in the Americas, St. Kitts and Nevis celebrates its Independence Day on September 19th of every year; the country officially gained its independence from the United Kingdom on September 19, 1983; and

WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the Americas landed on the islands in 1493, and named it "Saint Kitts" in honor of his patron saint, Saint Christopher; it was in 1623 when Saint Kitts became Britain's first territory in the West Indies as Nevis was later colonized in 1628; and

WHEREAS, The French also arrived to Saint Kitts and settled at the town of Basseterre; the French and British had amicably shared Saint Kitts for a while, however, by the mid-17th century sporadic fighting between the two had ensued; and

WHEREAS, Prior to these successful colonies, French Huguenot refugees tried to set up as far back as 1538, only to be raided by the Spanish; and

WHEREAS, In 1664, the French forced the British from Saint Kitts and in 1689, the French were driven out by the British; for a brief period in the early years of the 18th century, the French forces reclaimed the island and they did this again in 1782; and

WHEREAS, However, in 1783, France finally gave up its claim on Saint Kitts to Great Britain by signing the Treaty of Paris; and

WHEREAS, Since that time, Saint Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands were governed as a single colony by the British; the Leeward Islands Federation joined together Saint Kitts, Nevis, and Anguilla as a British dependency in 1871; and

WHEREAS, In 1967, Saint Kitts, Nevis, and Anguilla became an autonomous member of the West Indies Associated States; the British placed Anguilla under its direct rule in 1971, and in 1980, Anguilla was officially removed from the dependency; and

WHEREAS, The 30th Anniversary of St. Kitts and Nevis's Independence provides an opportunity to recognize the significance of its contributions to the quality and character of life, and, through events and activities, for all people to gain a greater appreciation of its history and traditions, and of the role it has played, and will continue to play, in our society; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to recognize such events of significance which foster ethnic pride and exemplify the cultural diversity that represents and strengthens the fabric of the people and the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of St. Kitts and Nevis.