

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 47th Anniversary of the Independence of Barbados

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 47th Anniversary of the Independence of Barbados; and

WHEREAS, The celebration of Barbados' independence affirms the culture, identity and self-esteem of a people; it honors a rich heritage and illuminates Barbadian history and tradition, as well as the spirit of an indomitable people; and

WHEREAS, The people of this great State and nation and Barbados enjoy a deep and abiding relationship rooted in kinship and culture, and many New Yorkers proudly trace their own roots to Barbados; and

WHEREAS, After the first English settlement at Holetown in 1627, Barbados remained a British colony until achieving independence from Britain on November 30, 1966; and

WHEREAS, The first to arrive in Barbados were British sailors looking for water supplies for their voyage from South America to England in the year of 1625; in 1627 and 1628, British settlers came to the island and took control; the natives were then made slaves of the British who used them to plant sugar cane alongside slaves brought from Africa; and

WHEREAS, Several slave rebellions were planned during British rule, but none were successful; the number of African slaves that were brought from African nations increased as time passed, and in the 18th century, most of the population of Barbados was black, a contrast from the English and Scottish-Irish predominance from the previous century; and

WHEREAS, In 1834, slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire with Barbados included; however, it was not until the 1930s that the descendants of slaves began fighting for equal rights within Barbados; and

WHEREAS, The problem was exacerbated as British farmers still maintained political control of the island; in 1949, control was wrested away from the British, and Sir Grantley Adams, founder of the Barbados Labour Party, became the first Premier of Barbados in 1958; and

WHEREAS, Barbados was then a self-governing colony of the British, and Sir Grantley Adams started negotiations for the country's independence; it was eventually granted on November 30, 1966, and that same year, Barbados became part of the Commonwealth of Nations; a year later, the island was granted a seat at the United Nations and the Organization of American States; and

WHEREAS, The 47th Anniversary of Barbados' Independence provides an opportunity to recognize the significance of their contributions to the quality and character of life, and, through events and activities, for all people to gain a greater appreciation of Barbados' history and traditions, and of the role Barbadians have 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 47th Anniversary of the Independence of Barbados.