LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the celebration of Cinco de Mayo, May 5, 2014

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those events which foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of the cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to this concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the celebration of Cinco de Mayo, May 5, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Cinco de Mayo is a date of importance for the Mexican and Chicano communities; it marks the victory of the Mexican army over the French at the Battle of Puebla; and

WHEREAS, The "Batalla de Puebla" came to represent a symbol of Mexican unity and patriotism; with this victory, Mexico demonstrated to the world that Mexico and all of Latin America were willing to defend themselves from any foreign intervention, especially those from imperialist states bent on world conquest; and

WHEREAS, Cinco de Mayo's history has its roots in the French occupation of Mexico; and

WHEREAS, On July 17, 1861, President Benito Juarez issued a moratorium in which all foreign debt payments would be suspended for a brief period of two years, with the promise that after this period, payments would resume; and

WHEREAS, The English, Spanish and French refused to allow President Juarez to do this, and instead decided to invade Mexico and get payments by whatever means necessary; the Spanish and English eventually withdrew, but the French refused to leave; and

WHEREAS, On May 5, 1862, the French army began its advance; under General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguin, 5,000 Mestizo and Zapotec Indians defeated the French army in what came to be known as the "Batalla de Puebla" on the fifth of May; and

WHEREAS, A year later, the French occupied Mexico; the French occupying forces placed Maximilian I, Emperor of Mexico, on the throne of Mexico in 1864; the French, under pressure from the United States, eventually withdrew in 1866-1867; Maximilian was deposed by President Benito Juarez and executed, five years after the Battle of Puebla; and

WHEREAS, The Battle of Puebla was significant in that the 4,000 Mexican soldiers were greatly outnumbered by the French army of 8,000 that had not been defeated for almost 50 years; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, the "Batalla de Puebla" came to be known as simply "5 de Mayo"; and

WHEREAS, Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in the United States with parades, folkloric dancing, and other types of festive activities; and

WHEREAS, The celebration of Cinco de Mayo has contributed to the Mexican-American experience and to the preservation and enhancement of the Mexican culture and heritage, adding so much to the rich mosaic of which our great State and Nation are comprised; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the celebration of Cinco de Mayo, May 5, 2014.