

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim February 7, 2014, as Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to increase awareness of serious public health issues that affect the lives of the residents of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is moved to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim February 7, 2014, as Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD); and

WHEREAS, HIV is a crisis in African American communities, threatening the health and well-being of African American men and women across the United States; and

WHEREAS, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) is an HIV testing and treatment community mobilization initiative in the United States and across the Diaspora; the day highlights four specific action points for African American individuals and communities: get educated, get tested, get involved, and get treated; and

WHEREAS, Because testing is critical for prevention of HIV in Black communities, the founders of NBHAAD chose to mark February 7 of every year as Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in hopes that African Americans will mark the date as their annual or bi-annual day to get tested for HIV; and

WHEREAS, The focus of NBHAAD is to get Blacks educated about the basics of HIV and AIDS in their local communities; and

WHEREAS, Black men account for almost one-third of all new HIV infections in the United States, more than six times as high as the rate among white men, and more than twice that of Hispanic males; and

WHEREAS, Among Black women, although new HIV infections decreased 21%, this vulnerable population accounts for 13% of all new HIV infections, and the majority, at 64%, of all new infections among women overall; and

WHEREAS, In New York State, as of December there were 21,534 Black individuals living with HIV, compared to 12,404 Whites; and

WHEREAS, Data from the New York State Department of Health shows that Blacks/African Americans comprised 45.9% of newly diagnosed cases in the State in 2011, while Whites made up 19.8%; and

WHEREAS, Effective HIV prevention is a community-wide effort; NBHAAD organizers emphasize speaking about the importance of HIV prevention and treatment in as many arenas as possible, including local faith-based organizations, and supporting local AIDS service providers as key ways to be involved; and

WHEREAS, In addition, those who have HIV are encouraged to make connections with treatment and care services; going to doctors, receiving care, and taking prescribed HIV medicines helps individuals stay healthy and reduces the risk of transmitting the virus to others; and

WHEREAS, It is crucial that days such as National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day are observed in order to continue to raise awareness and eventually halt the spread of HIV/AIDS, not only in Black/African American communities but all communities throughout the State of New York, the United States of America, and around the world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim February 7, 2014, as Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction

with the observance of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day; and be it

further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.