

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim March 10, 2014, as Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Women and Girls 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 March 10, 2014, as Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, Of the 1.1 million people in the United States living with HIV, women 13 or older make up about 25% of all HIV diagnoses; and

WHEREAS, National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is an annual, nationwide observance that sheds light on the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls; the goal of this day is to offer support and hope, reduce the stigma of HIV/AIDS, and empower women and girls to embrace the theme, "Share Knowledge. Take Action"; and

WHEREAS, An important element of halting the spread of HIV is to increase individuals' awareness of their status; nearly 180,000 people in the United States do not know they are HIV-positive and, of this group, approximately 27,000 are women and girls; and

WHEREAS, It is important that women and girls get tested so they can know their status, make better health choices, reduce the risk of getting or transmitting the virus to others, and live longer, healthier lives if they are HIV-positive; due to delays in seeking testing, many individuals are diagnosed so late in the course of their HIV disease that they have already developed full-blown AIDS; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York has the largest number of women living with HIV in the country, with 38,840 women being affected; and

WHEREAS, Women of color make up approximately 90 percent of New York women living with HIV/AIDS; and

WHEREAS, Black women account for 13% of all new HIV infections, and the majority, at 64%, of all new infections among women overall; by the end of 2010, Hispanic/Latina women had an HIV infection rate more than four times that of white women, representing 15% of new HIV infections among women and 19% of all women living with HIV; and

WHEREAS, Older women are also at particular risk, as they are more likely than younger Americans to be diagnosed with HIV at a later stage in the disease which can lead to poorer diagnoses and shorter HIV-to-AIDS intervals; and

WHEREAS, It is crucial that days such as National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day are observed in order to continue to raise awareness and eventually halt the spread of HIV/AIDS, not only among women, but across 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 March 10, 2014, as Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Women and Girls 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.