LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating 192 years of the Independence of Brazil on September 7, 2014

WHEREAS, Brazil became a Portuguese colony in 1500 with the establishment of their first settlement, Sao Vicente; and

WHEREAS, Brazil was ruled from Lisbon for the next 300 years as a very fruitful colony: rich in lumber, minerals, gold, gemstones; all making Portugal very wealthy at the hands of indigenous people and imported slaves from Africa; and

WHEREAS, In 1808, Dom Joao VI and the Portuguese royal family fled from Napoleon and established the seat of government in Rio de Janeiro; and

WHEREAS, After the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, Dom Joao VI thought it best to establish Brazil as a kingdom similar to Portugal and worked the next several years toward that cause; and

WHEREAS, Portugal strongly disagreed with Brazilian sovereignty and Dom Joao's staying in Brazil, and sent an army to stabilize Brazil and return Dom Joao to Portugal; Dom Joao returned to Portugal leaving his 23 year old son, Pedro, to preside over Brazil; and

WHEREAS, Pedro, now known as Dom Pedro, continued his father's vision to bring about an autonomous Brazil, similar to what was happening in nearly every other Latin American territory during that era; and

WHEREAS, In Rio de Janeiro on September 7, 1822, Dom Pedro received a letter from Portugal saying that all power given to him had been annulled and that Portugal intended to enslave all of Brazil; and

WHEREAS, Pedro turned to his companions and spoke: "Friends, the Portuguese Cortes want to enslave and pursue us. From today on our relations are broken. No ties unite us anymore" and continued after he pulled out his blue-white armband that symbolized Portugal: "Armbands off, soldiers. Hail to the independence, to freedom and to the separation of Brazil"; and

WHEREAS, When arriving in the city of Sao Paolo on the night of September 7, 1822, Pedro and his fellow companions had spread the notice of the Brazilian independence from Portugal; and

WHEREAS, The Portuguese quickly gave in to the idea of a Brazilian empire; without a single shot being fired, Dom Pedro I became the first emperor of an independent Brazil; and

WHEREAS, The United States was the first country to recognize Brazilian independence in 1822; and

WHEREAS, International recognition of Brazil's independence came about on August 29, 1825, when a treaty was signed between Britain and Portugal; and

WHEREAS, Many Brazilians have made New York their home, and this Legislative Body is justly proud to thank the Brazilian people for their contributions to this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate 192 years of the Independence of Brazil on September 7, 2014.