

Senate Resolution No. 1502

BY: Senator CROCI

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of the United States' entrance into World War I on April 2, 2017

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend events which evoke the historical, social and cultural development of this great State, and pay tribute to the memory of individuals of remarkable courage and strength of character, whose purposeful lives embodied the spirit of the principles upon which this Nation was founded; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the United States' entrance into World War I on Sunday, April 2, 2017; and

WHEREAS, During World War I, New York State contributed vast amounts of money, material and men to the war effort; and

WHEREAS, The enormity of New York's role in the "war to end all wars" cannot be overstated; between April 2, 1917, and November 11, 1918, 518,864 New Yorkers entered military service; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers comprised more than 10% of the entire American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.), and consequently, New York State endured more than 28% of all Americans killed during the conflict; 13,956 New Yorkers paid the ultimate sacrifice on the battlefields of France; and

WHEREAS, During World War I, New York State provided some of the most famous units including the 165th Infantry Regiment of the 42nd "Rainbow" Division; the former 69th New York had earned fame as the "Fighting Irish" during the Civil War and retained both its Irish character and reputation in the trenches of the Western Front; and

WHEREAS, The African-American 369th Infantry Regiment, the "Harlem Hellfighters" (formerly the 15th Regiment of the New York National Guard), became one of the most decorated regiments of the war while fighting for the French Army; and

WHEREAS, The infamous "Lost Battalion" was part of the 77th "Liberty" Division comprised largely of draftees from New York City; and

WHEREAS, New York's National Guard 27th Division spearheaded the Allied breakthrough of the vaunted Hindenburg Line in the Fall of 1918, but at tremendous cost; the heroism of New Yorkers during the war did not go unrecognized; New Yorkers earned 18 of the 121 Medals of Honor awarded during the war, or 13% of the total number of awards; and

WHEREAS, By the end of the war, there were more than 38,000 New York companies employing more than one million workers in wartime industry; companies such as Remington Arms in Ilion, Eastman Kodak in Rochester,

General Electric in Schenectady, and Alcoa in Massena contributed immensely to the production of weapons and equipment for the American and Allied war efforts; and

WHEREAS, New York Harbor was central to America's role in France; of the 2.1 million servicemen in Europe during World War I, 1.65 million sailed from New York as did the bulk of the material needed to equip the A.E.F.; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers played an equally important role on the home front; as the wealthiest state in the Nation, New York contributed more in taxes to the war effort than any other state; and

WHEREAS, New York City's banks supplied more than 2.5 billion dollars in loans to the cash-strapped Allied governments during the war, enabling the city to surpass London as the world's credit capital; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers purchased approximately one third of the Liberty Bonds sold during the War, and the state's citizens proved immensely generous in their charitable giving between 1914-1918; and

WHEREAS, As our State and Nation observes this 100th Anniversary, we reflect with solemn reverence upon the valor of a generation that served with honor, and pay tribute to the more than four million servicemen who left their families to serve bravely, a world away from everything they knew and everyone they loved; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the United States' entrance into World War I on April 2, 2017; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the New York State Museum.