

Senate Resolution No. 2316

BY: Senator COMRIE

memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to
proclaim May 22, 2017, as Maritime Day in the State
of New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who give positive definition to the profile and disposition of our American character profoundly strengthen our shared commitment to the exercise of freedom; and

WHEREAS, National Maritime Day commemorates the first voyage of a steamship across the Atlantic Ocean; and

WHEREAS, On May 22, 1819, the S.S. Savannah departed for Europe under steam; although the ship was also rigged with sails, it paved the way for future steamship success; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress, by joint resolution of May 20, 1933, designated May 22 of each year as National Maritime Day; and

WHEREAS, Today, National Maritime Day honors shipping and merchant marines in general; and

WHEREAS, The American Merchant Marine is the lifeline which links America with its overseas trading partners; in times of peace, it builds our economy; in times of national emergency, it provides logistic support to our United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, various estimates state that a total of at least 5,662 to more than 8,300 merchant seamen and officers died or went missing, as many as 12,000 were wounded, and more than 600 became prisoners of war; and

WHEREAS, Some sources place the number of merchant marines killed in excess of 9,000, including those who eventually died from wartime injuries; and

WHEREAS, However, because the merchant marine was not, and is not, a single discrete organization, and it did not have a centralized record-keeping system or any official historians, researchers or archives, the records of the numbers of merchant marines killed, wounded, missing and taken prisoner vary considerably; consequently a final exact accounting of all casualties may never be known; and

WHEREAS, Depending on the numbers one accepts, the proportional casualty rate for the United States merchant marines may have either exceeded that of any of the uniformed military services, or was only slightly less than that of the United States Marine Corps; however, more recent analyses have called these long-standing estimates into question; and

WHEREAS, Whatever the actual numbers, however, the critical fact remains that many thousands of civilian merchant marines bravely served the United States during World War II, and thousands of those sailors died in combat, without receiving the honor, recognition and respect of similar sacrifices made by the uniformed military services; and

WHEREAS, The first maritime school in the country, SUNY Maritime is a four-year college located on a 55-acre scenic waterfront property at historic Fort Schuyler on the Throgs Neck peninsula; this illustrious institution prepares students for careers in the maritime industry, government, military, and private industry; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 22, 2017, as Maritime Day in the State of New York; 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.