

BY: Senator HAMILTON

OBSERVING and celebrating May 16-June 14, 2018, as Ramadan, the month of fasting for the Muslim community, in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is a long and proud tradition of the State of New York to recognize and applaud customs which foster a spirit of community and pride as they preserve and enhance the rich cultural heritage and ethnic diversity of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to observe and celebrate May 16 - June 14, 2018, as Ramadan, the month of fasting for the Muslim community, in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Ramadan is the holiest month in the Islamic calendar and, in the year 2018, it began on May 16th; and

WHEREAS, Ramadan is a special month of the year for over one billion Muslims throughout the world; it is a time for inner reflection, devotion to God, and self-control; Muslims think of it as a kind of tune-up for their spiritual lives; and

WHEREAS, There are as many meanings of Ramadan as there are Muslims; the third "pillar" or religious obligation of Islam, fasting, has many special benefits; among these, the most important is that it is a means of learning self-control; and

WHEREAS, Due to the lack of preoccupation with the satisfaction of bodily appetites during the daylight hours of fasting, a measure of ascendancy is given to one's spiritual nature, which becomes a means of coming closer to God; and

WHEREAS, Ramadan is also a time of intensive worship, reading of the Qur'an, giving charity, purifying one's behavior, and doing good deeds; as a secondary goal, fasting is a way of experiencing hunger and developing sympathy for the less fortunate, and learning thankfulness and appreciation for all of God's bounties; and

WHEREAS, Fasting is also beneficial to the health and provides a break in the cycle of rigid habits or overindulgence; while voluntary fasting is recommended for Muslims, during Ramadan fasting becomes obligatory; sick people, travelers, and women in certain conditions are exempted from the fast but must make it up as they are able; and

WHEREAS, Perhaps fasting in Ramadan is the most widely practiced of all the Muslim forms of worship; Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar; the much-anticipated start of the month is based on a combination of physical sightings of the moon and astronomical calculations; the practice varies from place to place, some places relying heavily on sighting reports and others totally on calculations;

and

WHEREAS, In the United States, most communities follow the decision of the Islamic Society of North America, which accepts bonafide sightings of the new moon anywhere in the United States as the start of the new month; the end of the month, marked by the celebration of 'Eid-ul-Fitr, is similarly determined; and

WHEREAS, The daily period of fasting starts at the breaking of dawn and ends at the setting of the sun; in between -- that is, during the daylight hours -- Muslims totally abstain from food, drink, smoking, and marital sex; the usual practice is to have a pre-fast meal (suhoor) before dawn and a post-fast meal (iftar) after sunset; and

WHEREAS, The last 10 days of Ramadan are a time of special spiritual power as everyone tries to come closer to God through devotions and good deeds; the night on which the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed to the Prophet, known as the Night of Power (Lailat ul-Qadr), is generally taken to be the 27th night of the month; the Qur'an states that this night is better than a thousand months, therefore many Muslims spend the entire night in prayer; and

WHEREAS, During the month, Muslims try to read as much of the Qur'an as they can; most try to read the whole book at least once; some spend part of their day listening to the recitation of the Qur'an in a mosque; and

WHEREAS, At the completion of the obligation of fasting known as 'Eid-ul-Fitr festival, Muslims use many phrases in various languages to congratulate one another by saying "'Eid mubarak (A Blessed 'Eid)"-- universal; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to observe and celebrate May 16-June 14, 2018, as Ramadan, the month of fasting for the Muslim community, in the State of New York; and be it further

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