

BY: M. of A. McDonald

COMMEMORATING the 85th Anniversary of the
Ukrainian Famine-Genocide, known as Holodomor

WHEREAS, The Ukrainian famine-genocide of 1932-1933, known as Holodomor, was a man-made famine that caused the deaths of at least five million innocent men, women and children in Ukraine, resulting in the annihilation of an estimated 25 percent of the rural population of that country, at the time one of the most productive agricultural areas of the Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, The man-made famine also resulted in the deaths of an estimated one million to two million people in regions outside Ukraine, mostly in the largely ethnically Ukrainian North Caucasus territory; and

WHEREAS, These people were starved to death by forced agricultural collectivization and grain seizures by the Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, Western observers and scholars who accurately reported on the existence of the famine as it was occurring were subjected to disparagement and criticism; and

WHEREAS, The Soviet Union and many scholars in the West denied the existence of the famine until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 made access to Soviet Union archives, and thereby the documentation of the premeditated nature of the famine and its harsh enforcement, possible; and

WHEREAS, The final report, delivered to Congress on April 22, 1988, of the United States Commission on the Ukraine Famine concluded that the victims "starved to death in a man-made famine" and also that (Soviet dictator) "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against the Ukrainians in 1932-1933"; and

WHEREAS, Although the famine resulted in one of the largest losses of human life in the 20th Century, its occurrence remains insufficiently known in the United States and throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, The official recognition of the famine by the government of Ukraine, including by the country's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, represents a significant step in the reestablishment of Ukraine's national identity and the advancement of efforts to establish a democratic and free Ukraine that is fully integrated into the Western community of nations; and

WHEREAS, Whether it was political oppression or religious persecution that caused Ukrainian immigrants to pursue better lives for themselves and their families, their desire to live in peace and enjoy liberty was so strong that it drew generations of Ukrainian immigrants to New York State and elsewhere in the United States in an effort to rebuild their lives; and

WHEREAS, New York State is now home to over one-hundred and fifty thousand of Ukrainian-Americans; Ukrainians living in New York State have enriched our state through their leadership and contributions in agriculture, business, academia, government and the arts; and

WHEREAS, Since 2006, Ukraine has marked November as the month of commemoration for the victims of the famine; and

WHEREAS, A memorial to the millions who perished in the Holodomor was erected in Washington, D.C. in August of 2015, and the dedication ceremony took place in November of that same year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 85th Anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933, known as Holodomor, and to solemnly remember and honor its millions of victims; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to encourage individuals, educators, businesses, groups, organizations and public institutions to observe Holodomor Remembrance Month with appropriate activities designed to honor the victims and educate New Yorkers about this tragedy; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Capital District Holodomor, Ukrainian Genocide Commemoration Committee.