

BY: Senator RIVERA

MEMORIALIZING Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim
December 1-7, 2019, as Crohn's and Colitis Awareness
Week in the State of New York

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body takes great pride in recognizing official months established to increase awareness of serious illnesses that affect the lives of many New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim December 1-7, 2019, as Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week; and

WHEREAS, Crohn's and a related disease, ulcerative colitis, are the two main disease categories that belong to a larger group of illnesses called inflammatory bowel disease (IBD); and

WHEREAS, The disease is named after Dr. Burrill B. Crohn, who in 1932, along with two of his colleagues, Dr. Leon Ginzburg and Dr. Gordon D. Oppenheimer, published a landmark paper describing the features of what is known today as Crohn's disease; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 350 people develop Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis; according to the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA), 1.6 million Americans are estimated to be affected by any form of IBD; and

WHEREAS, Crohn's disease may affect as many as 780,000 Americans; men and women are equally likely to be affected, and while the disease can occur at any age, Crohn's is more prevalent among adolescents and young adults between the ages of 15 and 35; and

WHEREAS, Because the symptoms of these two illnesses are so similar, it is sometimes difficult to establish the diagnosis definitively; in fact, approximately 10 percent of colitis cases are unable to be pinpointed as either ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease and are called indeterminate colitis; and

WHEREAS, Both illnesses do have one strong feature in common which is they are both marked by an abnormal response by the body's immune system; in people with Crohn's disease, the immune system mistakes food, bacteria, and other materials in the intestine for foreign or invading substances, and launches an attack on the person's body; and

WHEREAS, In the process, the body sends white blood cells into the lining of the intestines, where they produce chronic inflammation; and

WHEREAS, These cells then generate harmful products that ultimately lead to ulcerations and bowel injury; when this happens, the patient experiences the symptoms of IBD; and

WHEREAS, The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA) was co-founded by William and Shelby Modell, who lost their son, Michael, to Crohn's disease; and

WHEREAS, The mission of CCFA is to cure and prevent Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis through research, as well as to improve the quality of life of children and adults affected by these digestive diseases through education and support; and

WHEREAS, Many New Yorkers have been diagnosed with this debilitating disease; this Legislative Body recognizes the vital importance of CCFA in providing excellence in care through awareness, education and treatment, and its evident commitment to this mission; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater awareness of this serious health condition, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, State and National levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim December 1-7, 2019, as Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week 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.