

BY: Senator GOUNARDES

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor
Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 22, 2020, as
Environmental Education Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to highlight days of awareness which draw attention to important and beneficial causes, and to pay tribute to those who have dedicated their time and energy to making the State of New York a clean, beautiful, environmentally friendly place to call home; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 22, 2020, as Environmental Education Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with National Environmental Education Week; and

WHEREAS, Hosted by the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF), National Environmental Education Week, which will be held April 20-24, 2020, is the United States' largest celebration of environmental education; and

WHEREAS, NEEF is the nation's leading organization in lifelong environmental learning, connecting people to knowledge they use to improve the quality of their lives and the health of the planet; congressionally chartered in 1990, to complement the work of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), NEEF is a non-partisan, non-advocacy organization working to make the environment more accessible, relatable, relevant, and connected to people's daily lives; and

WHEREAS, April 22, 2020, also marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, a day set aside to celebrate the beauty and bounty of our planet and to revitalize the efforts required to protect, and maintain respect for, the environment and its resources; and

WHEREAS, Responding to widespread environmental degradation, Gaylord Nelson, a United States Senator from Wisconsin, called for an environmental teach-in, or Earth Day, to be held on April 22, 1970; that year, over 20 million people across the country participated, including an estimated one million people in New York City, the largest gathering in the Nation; and

WHEREAS, The first Earth Day is credited with launching a wave of action, including the passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States such as the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts; in addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established; and

WHEREAS, Today, Earth Day focuses on environmental education and is celebrated each year on April 22nd in 175 countries by more than 500

million people, making it the planet's largest civic event; and

WHEREAS, Environmental education empowers students around the world to solve the climate crisis and develop the skills, optimism and resolve to lead the environmental movement of tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, Environmental education also builds emotional and social skills including self-esteem, character development, team work, leadership skills and climate literacy by encouraging students to research and think critically about complex environmental issues; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, green schoolyards promote physical health by providing many active and cooperative play options for children of different abilities, ages and genders; outdoor learning may also contribute to greater long-term retention of academic material through hands-on, experiential learning; and

WHEREAS, Environmental education prepares students for careers in green and STEM industries, which are high in-demand, and promotes civic engagement and environmental awareness, fostering an ability to participate in lifelong environmental decision making and stewardship; and

WHEREAS, New York's diverse mountain ranges, lakes, streams, rivers, forests, flora, and fauna are natural wonders that should be protected from depletion and pollution; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that our continued push for new development, investment in new technologies, and increased demand for our planet's natural resources is coupled with sustainability initiatives which encourage renewable energy, eco-friendly business practices, the creation of new green jobs, and long-term thinking about the environmental impact of new policies; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 22, 2020, as Environmental Education Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, and the National Environmental Education Foundation.