

Senate Resolution No. 1955

BY: Senator KAVANAGH

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
February 24, 2022, as Student Press Freedom Day in
the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to increase awareness of the safety and protection of our journalists; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 24, 2022, as Student Press Freedom Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Student Press Freedom Day; and

WHEREAS, On January 13, 1988, the Supreme Court ruling in the Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier case greatly expanded the ability of school officials to censor student work; and

WHEREAS, Established in 2018 by the Student Press Law Center to mark the 30th anniversary of the Kuhlmeier decision, Student Press Freedom Day is an occasion to celebrate the field of student journalism and advocate for freedom of speech, and liberty from censorship; and

WHEREAS, Observed annually, Student Press Freedom Day is a national day of action when student journalists in the United States raise awareness of the challenges they face, celebrate their contributions to their schools and communities, and take actions to protect and restore their First Amendment freedoms; and

WHEREAS, On February 24, 2022, the Student Press Law Center is holding a day of action known as Student Press Freedom Day; student journalists must be empowered to tell the stories most important to their communities, free from overt censorship; the theme for Student Press Freedom Day 2022 is "Unmute Yourself!" a series of events, trainings and community building opportunities designed to uplift student journalists' voices and prepare them to fight for press freedom journalism; and

WHEREAS, New Voices of New York, the high school student organization in New York which advocates for student press freedoms, is a movement to empower student journalists; and

WHEREAS, The integrity of journalism is derived from the Code of Ethics as determined by the Society of Professional Journalists; and

WHEREAS, Journalism is a pillar of democracy and a free press is protected by the U.S. Constitution, the responsibility and freedoms allowed therein should apply to student journalists guided by educational institutions as well; and

WHEREAS, Student reporters are the next generation of journalists; it is a difficult time for journalists as media across the country has come under attack; recognizing the importance of the profession will support journalistic integrity and independence which is needed in a democratic society; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 24, 2022, as Student Press Freedom Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, the Student Press Law Center, and New Voices of New York chapters throughout the State of New York.