

BY: Senator PARKER

CELEBRATING Holi, an ancient Hindu Spring Festival, with the 34th Annual Phagwah Parade on March 27, 2022

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those events which foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to celebrate Holi, an ancient Hindu Spring Festival, with the 34th Annual Phagwah Parade, to be held on Sunday, March 27, 2022; and

WHEREAS, The Phagwah Parade is an annual Hindu celebration in Richmond Hill, the home to the largest Indo-Caribbean community in the United States; for 34 years, the residents of this neighborhood have hosted the biggest Phagwah celebration in North America; and

WHEREAS, Over 20,000 people attend the Phagwah Parade each year; traditionally, participants paint one another with dye and powder; at the culmination of the parade, there are live music performances as well as other traditional cultural celebrations that last into the early evening; and

WHEREAS, Sponsored by the Federation of Hindu Mandirs, Inc. (FOHM) and the Arya Spiritual Center (ASC), with support from the Hindu Parades and Festivals Committee, Inc. the 34th Annual Phagwah Parade is proud to be able to contribute to the cultural diversity of the great City of New York; and

WHEREAS, Holi, or Phagwah as it is commonly known throughout the Caribbean, is an ancient Hindu Spring Festival, also known as the Festival of Colors, which celebrates fertility, color, love, and the triumph of good over evil; and

WHEREAS, The Festival signifies the coming of spring, the joy of friendship, and equality for all; and

WHEREAS, The colored powders used in Holi represent love, happiness, and the freedom to live vibrantly, which are all principles shared and promoted by the Caribbean Equality Project (CEP); and

WHEREAS, The origins of the festival can be found in various legends in Hindu mythology, one of which tells the story of a demon, Holika, and her brother, King Hiranyakashipu; on the night before Holi, bonfires are lit to signify the burning of Holika and the victory of good over evil; and

WHEREAS, The timing of Holi depends on the moon, meaning the date of

the event can vary, although it usually occurs in March to mark the end of winter; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend events which symbolize the historical, social and cultural development of this great State and embody the spirit of the principles upon which this Nation was founded; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate Holi, an ancient Hindu Spring Festival, with the 34th Annual Phagwah Parade on March 27, 2022; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Federation of Hindu Mandirs, Inc., the Arya Spiritual Center, the Hindu Parades and Festivals Committee, Inc., and the Caribbean Equality Project.