

BY: Senator REICHLIN-MELNICK

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 2022, as Indian American Heritage Month in the State of New York

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

WHEREAS, The citizens of this great Empire State are proud to recognize and commemorate Indian American Heritage Month, an observance which celebrates the contributions of Indian Americans to New York State's unique heritage; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 2022, as Indian American Heritage Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, The Immigration and Nationality Act, abolished the national origins quota system which was American immigration policy since the 1920s, replacing it with a preference system which focused on immigrants' skills and family relationships with citizens or United States residents; and

WHEREAS, This 1965 Act marked a radical break from the immigration policies of the past and significantly increased Indian immigration to the United States from fewer than 15,000 prior to the Act, to more than 200,000 by 1980; and

WHEREAS, Today, immigration from India is currently at its highest level in history; there are approximately four million Indian Americans residing in the United States with a growth rate of nearly 70 percent; and

WHEREAS, Indian Americans greatly contribute to the leadership, wisdom and vitality of our great State and Nation, and have attained one of the highest educational levels of all ethnic groups in the United States; an astounding 72 percent have a bachelor's degree compared to the 28 percent national average; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation is blessed with many citizens of Indian descent who are distinguished by their excellence and their contributions to all fields of endeavor; some of these esteemed residents include: 2014 Miss America and 2013 Miss New York, Nina Davuluri; Comedian, Aziz Ansari; Musician, Norah Jones; former Governor of Louisiana, Bobby Jindal; Microsoft CEO, Satya Nadella; former United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley; the first Indian-American elected as United States Vice-President, Kamala Harris; the first Indian-American elected to Congress, Dalip Singh Saund; the first Indian-American elected to the New York State Senate, Kevin Thomas; the first Indian-Americans elected

to the New York State Assembly, Jenifer Rajkumar and Zohran Mamdani; and the first Indian-American woman elected to be a county legislator in the State of New York, Rockland County Legislator Aney Paul; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, there are nearly 35,000 Indian American doctors practicing in the United States including Doctor Sanjay Gupta, renowned Neurosurgeon and Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery at Emory University School of Medicine and Associate Chief of Neurosurgery at Grady Memorial Hospital; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to recognize those important months which remind us of the rich and diverse heritage of our great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, It is duly fitting that all New Yorkers join in these important celebrations of one of our State's most vibrant communities; this much anticipated observance and its accompanying activities will foster greater appreciation for Indian culture and serve to promote the spirit of cooperation that is characteristic of all citizens of New York State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 2022, as Indian American Heritage Month in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York.