

Assembly Resolution No. 183

BY: M. of A. Seawright

MEMORIALIZING Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim
April 2021, as Poetry Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to realize the beauty of poetry and how it is enjoyed by many citizens of New York State; 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 2021, as Poetry Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Poetry Month; and

WHEREAS, National Poetry Month seeks to emphasize the extraordinary legacy of American poetry, promote the publishing of the works of modern poets, and make poetry an important part of our children's education; and

WHEREAS, We commemorate this month in special recognition of the late Florence Howe, native New Yorker, graduate of Hunter College, champion of the women's liberation movement, and founder of the Feminist Press which made available "a legacy of writings by and about women" by publishing and republishing works of authors that include: Zora Neale Hurston, Willa Cather, and Alice Walker; and

WHEREAS, As we celebrate the life and work of Florence Howe, we dedicate ourselves to proclaim this month as Poetry Month in an effort to promote the works of New York State poets as she did in her numerous literary anthologies; and

WHEREAS, New York State has been home to some of the most important writers in the history of poetry, including: Walt Whitman, the revolutionary poet who introduced the world to modern day poetry; Emma Lazarus, the author of "The New Colossus" affixed upon the base of the Statue of Liberty; Langston Hughes, one of the most famous writers of the Harlem Renaissance; Allan Ginsberg, the poet who defined the Beat generation; Audre Lord, the internationally renowned poet and activist who spoke of her experience as a black lesbian woman; Eileen Myles, "the rock star of modern poetry"; and so many more; and

WHEREAS, In 2005, the Empire State Building was illuminated with blue lights in celebration of the 10th Anniversary of National Poetry Month; and

WHEREAS, New York is internationally recognized as the birthplace of the New York School of Poets in the 1960s, an artistic movement like no other that revolutionized American poetry with influences of literary surrealism and abstract expressionist painting; and

WHEREAS, Poetry and activism have so often converged in the history

of our State during the abolition, suffrage, sexual liberation, and civil rights movements, and we must honor all the poets who dedicated their lives to improving the conditions of our great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Poetry Month seeks to introduce Americans to the continuous achievements of American poets and women writers in particular; and

WHEREAS, The New York Public Library hosts readings, discussions, and events every April to commemorate National Poetry Month with a focus on Persian Poetry by Women for the April 2021 event; and

WHEREAS, Poetry Month is consistent with New York City's annual participation in Poem in Your Pocket Day; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate and increase awareness of influential women poets and their increasing contribution to the ongoing fight for gender equality and recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 2021, as Poetry Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Poetry Month, to urge all residents to observe this month, and to celebrate the riches our community has to offer; 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.