

BY: M. of A. Rajkumar

COMMEMORATING the Indian-American community's celebration of Indian Independence Day, on August 15, 2021

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, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the Indian-American community's celebration of Indian Independence Day, on August 15, 2021, and to recognize and commemorate August of 2021 as Indian-American Heritage Month, an observance which celebrates the contributions of Indian-Americans to New York State's unique heritage; and

WHEREAS, India obtained its independence through the Indian Independence Movement and was able to attain its independence in a primarily non-violent manner and through civil disobedience, to which the United States quickly recognized India as an independent and sovereign nation; and

WHEREAS, Throughout India, vibrant and joyful celebrations occur to honor independence day including a Presidential address to the nation, the hoisting of the flag on historical sites including at Red Fort in Delhi, and paying tribute to the leaders of the Indian Independence Movement, along with gleeful flag hoisting ceremonies throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, The Republic of India is a "sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic" with a parliamentary system of government, and is the largest democracy in the world with a population of over 1 billion people with a vast and diverse linguistic and religious population; 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 accounting for 1.2% of the United States population with the largest population residing in the New York City Metropolitan Area, with an estimated population of over 500,000 and accounting for over 2.8% of the region's population, and being the largest area populated by Indians in the Western Hemisphere; 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 71% of Indians have a bachelor's degree compared to the 32% national average; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to recognize

those important days and 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 commemorate the Indian-American community's celebration of Indian Independence Day, on August 15, 2021; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Consul General of India, and notable Indian-American organizations.