

BY: M. of A. Dickens

COMMEMORATING the 103rd Anniversary of the Harlem Hellfighters, and paying tribute to these soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment for their courage, bravery, service and dedication to the United States Army

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so faithfully and courageously in wars in which our Nation's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace during peacetime, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 103rd Anniversary of the Harlem Hellfighters, and to pay tribute to these soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment for their courage, bravery, service and dedication to the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, The 369th Infantry Regiment, formerly known as the 15th New York National Guard Regiment, was an infantry regiment of the United States Army National Guard during World War I and World War II; and

WHEREAS, The Regiment consisted mainly of African Americans, though it also included a number of Puerto Rican Americans during World War II; it was known for being the first African American regiment to serve with the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I; and

WHEREAS, Before the 15th New York National Guard Regiment was formed, any African American who wanted to fight in the war had to enlist in the French or Canadian armies; the regiment was nicknamed the Harlem Hellfighters, the Black Rattlers, and the Men of Bronze, which was given to the regiment by the French; and

WHEREAS, The nickname Harlem Hellfighters was given to them by the Germans due to their toughness and that they never lost a man through capture, lost a trench or a foot of ground to the enemy; and

WHEREAS, The Harlem Hellfighters were the first all-African American regiment which helped change the American public's opinion on African American soldiers and paved the way for future African American soldiers; and

WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 103rd Anniversary of the Harlem Hellfighters, and to pay tribute to these soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment for their courage, bravery, service and dedication to the United States Army; and

be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Harlem Hellfighters Advisory Committee.