

BY: Senator PALUMBO

COMMENDING the Ocular Melanoma Foundation upon the occasion of hosting its Eye Patch Days on May 19-21, 2023

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to commend and recognize those esteemed individuals and organizations within the medical community for their extraordinary and sustained contributions to the progress of medicine and the improvement of life; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Ocular Melanoma Foundation upon the occasion of hosting its Eye Patch Days on May 19-21, 2023, in conjunction with the observance of National Melanoma Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, Ocular Melanoma (OM), scientifically named uveal melanoma, is a cancer (melanoma) of the eye involving the iris, ciliary body, or choroid, collectively referred to as the uvea; and

WHEREAS, Tumors arise from the pigment cells (melanocytes) that reside within the uvea giving color to the eye; these melanocytes are distinct from the retinal pigment epithelium cells underlying the retina that do not form melanomas; and

WHEREAS, The Ocular Melanoma Foundation (OMF) was established in 2003 by Dr. Robert C. Allen, a Harvard-trained ophthalmologist, and his eldest son, Grant Allen; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Allen was also an OM patient, and in confronting this relatively rare disease as both doctor and patient, he was struck by the lack of up-to-date treatment information available to patients, their families and healthcare professionals, as well as the paucity of research initiatives devoted to ocular/uveal melanoma as a melanoma wholly distinct from skin cancer; and

WHEREAS, Today, a nonprofit charitable corporation, the Ocular Melanoma Foundation remains the leading resource for eye cancer research funding and patient/caregiver support, and is often the first stop in a newly diagnosed patient's treatment journey; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, this vital organization is committed to accelerating and enhancing scientific research, advocacy, and awareness of ocular melanoma, as well as to providing education and support to patients, their families, and healthcare professionals; and

WHEREAS, Specifically, OMF is raising funds, engaging academicians and clinicians, and actively partnering with foundations and other leading agencies supporting cancer research to: support and accelerate scientific research and discovery and its translation into effective treatment options for patients; provide resources for education and

support to OM patients, their families, and to healthcare professionals treating OM; and act as an advocate within the melanoma and broader cancer community to raise the awareness of OM and the need for a cure; and

WHEREAS, As part of Melanoma Awareness Month, OMF is proud to support the annual Eye Patch Days to increase awareness of ocular melanoma and the need for dilated eye exams; and

WHEREAS, On these days, OMF Warriors around the globe will wear eye patches to raise awareness for ocular melanoma; wearing an eye patch is a great way to start a conversation with co-workers, friends and neighbors about OM and how important it is to see an ophthalmologist regularly; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, it is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious health issue, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, state, and national levels to support these patients as well as their families; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Ocular Melanoma Foundation upon the occasion of hosting its Eye Patch Days on May 19-21, 2023; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Ocular Melanoma Foundation.