

Senate Resolution No. 137

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
January 8, 2023, as War on Poverty Day in the State
of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to increase awareness of serious issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body hereby memorializes Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 8, 2023, as War on Poverty Day in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, War on Poverty Day is an unofficial holiday observed annually on January 8th to reflect on the impact of the Economic Opportunity Act and several other policies first introduced in 1964 and enacted as President Lyndon B. Johnson's response to the rising poverty level in the country at the time; and

WHEREAS, One definition of poverty is "not having enough resources for your basic needs," and it has a huge impact on people's lives and society; and

WHEREAS, "War on Poverty" generally refers to several initiatives proposed by Johnson's administration and passed by Congress as a way to expand economic opportunity through anti-poverty, health, education, and employment policy implementation; and

WHEREAS, In the words of former President Lyndon B. Johnson during his State of the Union address, "Our aim is not only to relieve the symptoms of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it."; this initiative is said to have been influenced by the 1962 expose titled "The Other America," which demonstrated that poverty in America was far more prevalent than commonly assumed; and

WHEREAS, President Johnson's declaration was the precedent of War on Poverty Day; furthermore, it was a vital component in congress passing the bipartisan Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and the even more important Civil Rights legislation which created the legislative framework that set the foundations for some of America's current social welfare programs; and

WHEREAS, Throughout President Johnson's administrations, the War on Poverty laid the foundation for America's present-day safety net programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or food stamps, Medicare and Medicaid, and many others; and

WHEREAS, Poverty does not discriminate, and it can happen to anyone; therefore, celebrating War on Poverty Day serves to recommit us all to the eradication of poverty; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious issue, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, State and national levels to stamp out poverty; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 8, 2023, as War on Poverty Day 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.