

BY: Senator PERSAUD

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
May 16, 2024, as Global Accessibility Awareness Day
in the State of New York

WHEREAS, By some estimates, as many as 2.6 billion people take part in digital gaming, a significant fraction of the global population; and

WHEREAS, Over the past decades, video games have become a mainstream form of entertainment, currently eclipsing Hollywood's box office sales; and

WHEREAS, Digital games are widely recognized as a popular, enjoyable and even beneficial activity from which players can derive a sense of well-being; and

WHEREAS, The popularity of games increases, so making games accessible becomes even more important; software technology is often difficult to access for players with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, The total number of people in the United States estimated to have their ability to play games affected by a disability is 32,213,000; and

WHEREAS, In New York State, about one in five of the adult, non-institutionalized population (about three million people) report an activity limitation; and

WHEREAS, Video games can be tools for disabled gamers to create rich, social experiences that they would not be able to have otherwise; and

WHEREAS, For those who cannot leave their homes, games are a way to explore and go on adventures without going anywhere; video games also offer a chance for players to be on an equal playing field, regardless of their disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Over 40% of military service members reported playing video games on a weekly basis; and

WHEREAS, One out of every 10 veterans alive today was seriously injured at some point while serving in the military, and three-quarters of those injuries occurred in combat; for many of these 2.2 million wounded warriors, the physical and emotional consequences of their wounds have endured long after they left the military, which includes hampering their ability to enjoy long loved hobbies; and

WHEREAS, Gaming can give newly disabled people a sense of normalcy; gaming is one of the most popular activities for soldiers stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, Adults may make up the majority of game players, but video games are more popular than ever among kids; 91% of U.S. children ages 2-17 play video games; and

WHEREAS, 5% of children in the U.S. aged 5-15 have a form of disability; and

WHEREAS, Thursday, May 16, 2024, marks the 13th Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD), the purpose of which is to get everyone talking, thinking, and learning about digital access/inclusion and people with different disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Includification is a phrase meant to convey the ideas of including everyone as an ongoing movement; game accessibility is not a topic that can be solved with one answer, or decision by one entity, but rather of movement by one segment of the video game community, disabled gamers, asking to be fairly included in regards to access of mainstream entertainment; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body would like to shine more awareness on how accessibility should be considered in all endeavors, including video games; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to Proclaim May 16, 2024, as Global Accessibility Awareness Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York; and the AbleGamers Foundation.