

BY: Senator THOMAS

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2024, as Sikh Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of the diverse cultures that make up the communities throughout the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2024, as Sikh Awareness Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Sikhs have been living in the United States for more than 100 years, and during the early 20th Century, thousands of Sikh Americans worked on farms, in lumber mills and mines, and on the Oregon, Pacific & Eastern Railroad; and

WHEREAS, Sikhism is the fifth largest religion in the world and today, there are more than 30 million Sikhs worldwide and an estimated 500,000 Sikh Americans; and

WHEREAS, Vaisakhi is one of the most historically significant days of the year for Sikhs and is celebrated on April 14, 2024; and

WHEREAS, 2024 is the 555th birthday of the first of 10 gurus and founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak; this day is celebrated for Sikhs in New York State and worldwide as Guru Nanak's Gurburab and is one of the most important dates in the Sikh calendar; and

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans pursue diverse professions, and make rich contributions to the social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of the United States, including service as members of the United States Armed Forces and significant contributions to our great nation in agriculture, information technology, small businesses, the hotel industry, trucking, medicine, and technology; and

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans distinguished themselves by fostering respect among all people through faith and service; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York is committed to educating citizens about the world's religions, the value of religious diversity, tolerance grounded in First Amendment principles, a culture of mutual understanding, and the diminution of violence; and

WHEREAS, Today, the State of New York seeks to further the diversity of its community and afford all residents the opportunity to better understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared experiences of Sikh Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2024, as Sikh Awareness Month 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.