

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
June 1, 2023, as Reef Awareness 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 environmental issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; 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 June 1, 2023, as Reef Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of World Reef Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, Established by Raw Elements, World Reef Awareness Day serves as a call to action for consumers, businesses and organizations to reflect on the delicate ecosystem of our ocean's coral reefs; the day brings together the general public, influencers and opinion leaders to create active change through education and engagement; and

WHEREAS, Coral reefs are living communities of colonial organisms made of individual polyps which excrete a bone-like skeleton that forms large rock-like structures which are homes for thousands of organisms; and

WHEREAS, The health of a reef tells us a lot about the health of an ocean; many fish and ocean animals rely on the protection of the healthy, living reef for spawning season; it also supplies a rich, thriving food chain, from plankton and algae to the largest sea creatures, the reef ecosystem is a significant life support system; and

WHEREAS, The benefits of a healthy reef ecosystem go far beyond the ocean; coral reefs are essential to the plant and fish life, contribute to a lively fishing industry, protect beaches and coastlines from erosion, act as the oceans filter, provide life-saving medicines, and possibly the one animal on the planet capable of consuming plastic; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, our most productive reefs have been in decline due to coral bleaching, for example, the Great Barrier Reef has decreased by 40 percent; unfortunately, it is even worse along the Florida Keys and Caribbean, their decline is between 85 and 99 percent; and

WHEREAS, According to Dr. Craig Downs, Executive Director of Haereticus Environmental Lab, about 90 percent of the reefs in the Caribbean have disappeared since 1980; and

WHEREAS, Coral reefs die off for many reasons, some of which include rising sea temperatures; unmanaged, high-density tourism; industrial

pollution, plastic pollution, and sewage; and chemical sunscreens, which should be replaced with non-nano zinc oxide sunscreen; and

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

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim June 1, 2023, as Reef 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 Raw Elements.