

BY: Senator THOMAS

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating Vaisakhi, a historical and religious festival in Hinduism and Sikhism on April 14, 2023

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those events which foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities 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 celebrate Vaisakhi, a historical and religious festival in Hinduism and Sikhism on April 14, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Celebrated on the 13th or 14th of April each year, Vaisakhi commemorates the formation of Khalsa Panth of warriors under Guru Gobind Singh, the last living Guru of Sikhism, in 1699; this group of warriors was charged with protecting religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, Originated as a harvest festival, Vaisakhi is recognized as the beginning of the Sikh New Year, and for the year when Sikhism was born as a collective faith; it also highlights respect for the personality traits of dedication and self-sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, On this holiday, Sikhs from across the globe celebrate all day, whether it is singing, performing a traditional folk dance known as the Bangrha, watching a special procession known as Nagar Kirtan, visiting decorated Gudwaras, or being baptized into the Khalsa; and

WHEREAS, Revelers also follow the tradition of langar, where everyone in the community, no matter how rich or poor, come together to share a free meal; and

WHEREAS, Vaisakhi was also the day when colonial British empire officials committed the Jallianwala Bagh massacre at a gathering, an event influential to the Indian movement against colonial rule; and

WHEREAS, In Hinduism, Vaisakhi celebrates the start of the solar new year, based on the Vikram Samvat calendar; many Hindus observe the spring harvest festival through activities such as visiting temples and friends, and bathing in sacred rivers which include the Ganges, Jhelum, and Kaveri; and

WHEREAS, Vaisakhi is fundamentally about community, celebration, and progress, and these values are at the forefront of the collective consciousness as Sikhs gather together to mark the occasion; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend events which symbolize the historical, social and cultural

development of this great State and embody the spirit of the principles upon which this Nation was founded; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate Vaisakhi, a historical and religious festival in Hinduism and Sikhism.