

BY: Senator MYRIE

RECOGNIZING the 25th Anniversary of Black and Afro-Costa Rican Culture Day on August 31, 2023

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to those of true purpose and worthy accomplishment who foster a spirit of community and service and, simultaneously, work diligently to preserve their rich cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to recognize the 25th Anniversary of Black and Afro-Costa Rican Culture Day on August 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Black and Afro-Costa Rican Culture Day was established to promote the contributions of the African diaspora in Costa Rica, and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against people of African descent; and

WHEREAS, The population of Costa Rica is mostly white and mestizo (people of mixed European and Indigenous American ancestry); according to the 2011 census, only 6.7% of Costa Ricans were of mixed African and European ancestry and 1.1% were Afro-Caribbean or Black; and

WHEREAS, Most Afro-Costa Ricans descend from Afro-Caribbean migrant workers who came to Costa Rica in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries; however, some of them are descendants of African slaves brought to Costa Rica during the Spanish colonization of the Americas; and

WHEREAS, In the 1980s, it was decreed in Costa Rica on August 31 as the celebration of "Black Day", an initiative that was promoted by the Costa Rican Teachers Union (SEC), in the administration of Rodrigo Carazo; and

WHEREAS, Later, another decree was signed that extended the celebration of the "Black and Afro-Costa Rican Culture Day"; April 26, 2018, the date on which it is published in La Gaceta Digital, Law 9526 declares August the Historical Month of Afro-descendence in Costa Rica; and

WHEREAS, The Day of the Black Person and Afro-Costa Rican Culture was established by the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica in September of 2021, and was celebrated for the first time on September 4, 2022; the official date of the holiday is August 31, but celebratory events are held on the following Sunday; and

WHEREAS, Free for the working population, the declaration as a non-compulsory holiday is a necessary recognition and responds to a wide clamor of the Limonense population with the purpose of consolidating this celebration; and

WHEREAS, In addition, this would allow broad participation of all the inhabitants of the country in the activities carried out around this date; and

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to recognize those important days of recognition which remind us of the rich and diverse heritage of our great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, It is duly fitting that all New Yorkers join in these important celebrations of one of our State's most vibrant communities; this much anticipated observance and its accompanying activities will foster greater appreciation for Afro-Costa Rican culture and serve to promote the spirit of cooperation that is characteristic of all citizens of New York State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize the 25th Anniversary of Black and Afro-Costa Rican Culture Day on August 31, 2023; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Consulate General of Costa Rica in New York.