

BY: M. of A. Rosenthal L

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 30 - May 7, 2023, as End Plastic Pollution Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of Earth Day on April 22, 2023

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official weeks that are set aside to increase awareness of serious issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, The United States is the world's leading contributor of plastic waste, generating about 287 pounds of plastic per person per year; and

WHEREAS, The majority of plastics are made from fossil fuels and end up in landfills, taking hundreds of years to decompose; and

WHEREAS, Half of plastic waste comes from single-use plastics, including straws, but there are many alternative materials for these products that can replace single-use plastics, such as paper, sugar cane, and bamboo, as well as reusable materials, such as glass and stainless steel; and

WHEREAS, Americans use and discard over 500 million single-use plastic straws a day, and even though costumers often don't use or need a straw, many restaurants automatically provide plastic straws when serving water and other beverages; and

WHEREAS, A New York teenager, Samantha Fenigstein, has started a successful Skip the Straw initiative to change this use-and-dispose lifestyle and protect our environment by decreasing plastic straw use; and

WHEREAS, To date, Samantha Fenigstein has had conversations with many local business owners in Scarsdale, New York, who have committed to skipping the straw, and hundreds of New Yorkers have signed onto her Skip the Straw pledge on an individual level; and

WHEREAS, By taking the pledge, many will be encouraged to not only stop using plastic straws but also change their habits around the general use of single-use disposable plastics; the pledge will help shift New York's reliance on single-use plastics and increase the use of reusable products; and

WHEREAS, Every step we can take toward reducing plastic waste has an impact on environmental health and the effects of climate change; the more people who can commit to avoiding single-use plastics, the less plastic waste New York will have in its landfills; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is an important time for people to reflect on their habits and take environmental action, such as pledging to avoid

single-use plastics; and

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

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 30 - May 7, 2023, as End Plastic Pollution Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of Earth Day on April 22, 2023; 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.