

BY: M. of A. Meeks

RECOGNIZING Monday, March 10, 2025, as Harriet
Tubman Day

WHEREAS, Harriet Ross Tubman was an American heroine and patriot who faithfully served her country and liberated her people; her tireless efforts to attain freedom for those enslaved and her dedication to stop the inhuman practice of slavery should be recognized and celebrated; it is only fitting to pay tribute to an American heroine who sacrificed everything for the well-being of her people and country; and

WHEREAS, In June of 2003, legislation to make March 10th a Day of Commemoration was signed into law; March 10th recognizes the lifetime achievements and the historical legacy established by Harriet Tubman and her many accomplishments throughout the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Ross Tubman, the great American abolitionist, was born on a plantation in Dorchester County, Maryland, circa 1820; as was the case of many slaves, she was put to work as a field hand at an early age; and

WHEREAS, Because of her color and her status as a slave, Harriet Tubman was denied the opportunity to learn to read or write; nevertheless, she was able to rise above the limitations which were placed on her as a slave and as a Black woman; and

WHEREAS, In 1849, Harriet Tubman escaped to the northern region of the United States and settled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; while in Philadelphia, she met William Still, the Philadelphia Stationmaster of the "Underground Railroad"; and

WHEREAS, William Still and the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society (PAS) introduced Harriet Tubman to the inner workshops of the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, The Underground Railroad was a network of individuals and families who offered assistance, food, or shelter to slaves during their escape to the North; one year after her escape, Harriet Tubman became a conductor (a guide who led escaped slaves to freedom) of the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, In 1851, Harriet Tubman relocated members of her family to North Street in the City of St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, which eventually became her headquarters for the Underground Railroad; in the ensuing years, she became one of the most influential conductors; and

WHEREAS, In the mid-1850s, Harriet Tubman made the acquaintance of United States Senator, Secretary of State, and former New York Governor, William H. Seward, and his wife, Frances, in Auburn, New York; in 1857, the Swards provided a home for her in Auburn which was sold to her later; and

WHEREAS, This home would become the new base of operations for the Underground Railroad; when the Civil War began, Harriet Tubman was able to liberate hundreds of her people to freedom through this efficient network; she was proud to claim that she never ran her train off the track and never lost a passenger; and

WHEREAS, During the Civil War, Harriet Tubman served in the Union Army in South Carolina, first as a cook and nurse, and later, as a scout for raiding parties and a spy behind Confederate lines; after her service to the Union Army, she returned to Auburn, New York, where she lived the remaining years of her life; in 1903, she transferred ownership of her property to the A.M.E. Zion Church; and

WHEREAS, After Harriet Tubman's death on March 10, 1913, the church developed and managed her home and adjacent property in order to sustain her memory; she was buried in Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York, with full military honors; currently, the Harriet Tubman home and property are registered as National Historic Landmarks in Auburn, and the site is also part of the National Park Service Freedom Trail; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman was many things to many people, but to the Black slaves, she was considered to be the "Black Moses" who delivered the buried promise of freedom to them; through her actions and life, she embodied the true essence of service, spirit, and strength; because of her spirit, strength, and conviction, countless slaves were given hope; she was compelled to risk her own freedom so that others could experience freedom; and

WHEREAS, The Harriet Tubman National Historical Park is located in Auburn, New York; it consists of a group of properties, including the Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, the Harriet Tubman residence, and the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church and parsonage; and

WHEREAS, With the establishment of this Day of Commemoration, the rich historical legacy and life achievements of Harriet Tubman are recognized and celebrated in the State of New York annually; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize Monday, March 10, 2025, as Harriet Tubman Day.