Assembly Resolution No. 518

BY: M. of A. Gonzalez-Rojas

COMMEMORATING the 214th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Paraguay

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to celebrate historical events which exemplify the spirit and struggle of peoples throughout the world to achieve independence and live in peace and freedom; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 214th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Paraguay, to be celebrated on May 15, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Paraguay is a Spanish speaking country in South America that shares borders with Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina; and

WHEREAS, Pre-Columbian society in the wooded, fertile region which is now present-day Paraguay, consisted of semi-nomadic tribes, who were recognized for their fierce warrior traditions; and

WHEREAS, These indigenous tribes were members of five distinct language families, and 17 separate ethno-linguistic groups which still remain today; and

WHEREAS, Europeans first arrived in the area in the early 16th Century, and the settlement of Asuncion, the capital and largest city of Paraguay, was founded on August 15, 1537, by the Spanish explorer Juan de Salazar y Espinoza; and

WHEREAS, The city of Asuncion eventually became the center of a Spanish colonial province, as well as a primary site of the Jesuit missions and settlements in South America in the 18th Century; and

WHEREAS, Jesuit Reductions were founded and flourished in eastern Paraguay for about 150 years until the expulsion of the Jesuits by the Spanish crown in 1767; and

WHEREAS, Paraguay officially declared its independence after overthrowing the local Spanish administration on May 15, 1811; and

WHEREAS, The first Paraguayans arrived in America between 1841 and 1850; today, it is still a developing nation; its citizens have endured through both national political instability and a transition toward a democratic government; and

WHEREAS, While a small nation in size and population, Paraguay is a nation of rich cultural diversity; Guarani, the secondary national language, is spoken in communities throughout Paraguay; and

WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau in 2022, there

were about 24,500 Paraguayans currently living in the United States; historically, a significant number of Paraguayans left their home country during the nation's civil war in 1947, and relocated in large

cities across the United States with large concentrations located in New York's counties of Queens and Westchester; and

WHEREAS, According to the New York Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Paraguayan population in New York between 2010 and 2019 grew at an astounding rate of 154.4%, from a reported number of 1,674 in 2010, to the most recent count of 4,259 in 2019; likewise the percentage growth of the Paraguayan population in New York City doubled from 0.2% in 2010, to the most recent accounting of 0.4% in 2019; and

WHEREAS, Multiple cultural organizations in New York City are planning on holding various cultural and social gatherings as well as historical celebrations to commemorate the 214th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Paraguay; and

WHEREAS, These vital organizations will also be involved in celebrating the Republic of Paraguay's Independence to further the goal of cultivating and bringing awareness to the Paraguayan culture among Paraguayan people in and around New York City, and educating the importance of history and culture of Paraguayan to everyone; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize the great contributions which Paraguayans have brought to our State and Nation, and to wish them all continued success in their purposeful endeavors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 214th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Paraguay; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to esteemed Paraguayan organizations in the State of New York.