Assembly Resolution No. 540

BY: M. of A. Lemondes

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 20, 2025, as Armenian Heritage Day in the State of New York

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

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long- standing tradition, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 20, 2025, as Armenian Heritage Day in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, New York is proud to be the home of numerous ethnic communities, many of whom have prospered and enjoyed the freedom and democracy upon which our nation was founded; tragically, throughout history, the people of many countries have not realized the same autonomy and equality; and

WHEREAS, The seeds for the Armenian genocide were planted during negotiations among the European powers that led to the signing of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878; the ensuing rise of nationalism led to many revolutionary wars and independence movements within the decaying Ottoman Empire, causing Turkish leaders to become increasingly fearful that their ethnically diverse domain would begin to disintegrate; and

WHEREAS, From 1914 until 1922, in a systematic attempt to exterminate an entire population, the Ottoman Turks directed the killing of over one million Armenians and Assyrians living in Pontos, and 353,000 Pontian and Anatolian Greeks; furthermore, an equal number were forced to flee their homeland in one of the most condemnable atrocities in the history of the world; and

WHEREAS, The Ottoman and Kemals Neoturks engaged in exile, starvation, slaughter and murder, using axes and fire to massacre the Armenian and Pontic Greek population and perpetrate the first mass genocide of the 20th century, resulting in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, and the remaining 500,000 survived but were expelled from their homes; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative to pay tribute to the survivors of this atrocious time, as well as their descendants, who have made countless contributions to the enrichment of our culture and our way of life here in the great State of New York, and who stand as an inspiration to oppressed people around the world; and

WHEREAS, It is vital and proper to remember those who lost their lives in the Armenian Genocide, and it is paramount that people of all nations look at this horrific event in our world's not-so-distant

history as a way to learn a valuable lesson, so that such atrocities are not tolerated and are never committed again; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Armenian and Pontian community honor the memory of the victims of this genocide and emphasize that crimes against humanity must be condemned and never be allowed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 20, 2025, as Armenian Heritage Day in the State of New York; 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.