LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 8-15, 2016, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York

WHEREAS, An estimated 10 million people in the United States, and an estimated 3-6 percent of the world's population, have been diagnosed with Fibromyalgia (FM), an illness for which there is yet no known cause or cure; and

WHEREAS, A chronic syndrome that is increasing at alarming rates, Fibromyalgia causes debilitating widespread pain and fatigue, appears to have a genetic component, and occurs in women, men, and children of all ethnicities; and

WHEREAS, Patients with Fibromyalgia often have to learn to live with widespread pain throughout their bodies, extreme fatigue, sleep disorders, stiffness and weakness, migraine headaches, numbness and tingling, and impairment of memory and concentration; and

WHEREAS, It often takes an average of five years to receive a diagnosis of Fibromyalgia, and medical professionals frequently are inadequately educated regarding the diagnosis and treatment of Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, A 2007 study found that FM patients spend between $100-$1,000 per month above insurance costs to see healthcare providers; costs in the United States are estimated between $12-14 billion per year and account for loss of 1-2% of the nation's productivity; and

WHEREAS, According to a survey of 1,168 FM patients, 25% had received disability payments, and total healthcare costs may be 2-3 times higher than patients without FM; failure to diagnose and adequately treat Fibromyalgia has deep financial implications for patients and for the healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, According to a fact sheet provided by the National Fibromyalgia Association, 90% of physicians agree there is a need for more physician oriented information, and 82% of physicians agree that FM is difficult to treat with the tools that are currently available; use of complementary and alternative medicine is 2 1/2 times higher in FM patients; and

WHEREAS, Patients report that the optimal approach to treating Fibromyalgia is a team of physicians and complementary therapists tailoring the treatment for each individual patient; this can be accomplished best in an arrangement that facilitates communication between the patient and the team; and

WHEREAS, Awareness events need to be expanded that will continue to promote understanding and support within the broader community; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., a nonprofit charitable organization in the Capital District of New York, is dedicated to empowering all who face discrimination as a result of race, gender, socio-economic status, age, disabilities, and lifestyle choices; and

WHEREAS, Fibromyalgia patients are often misunderstood by the medical, business, and education communities, primarily due to the lack of education in medical schools about what is known regarding this potentially disabling illness; and

WHEREAS, Fibromyalgia patients often lose jobs, insurance, homes, and spouses or significant others due to lack of awareness and understanding about the potentially devastating impact of Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, under the leadership of Sue Shipe, PhD, developed the Fibromyalgia Task Force to address inequities in the diagnosis and treatment of Fibromyalgia

patients due to lack of adequate education of physicians regarding this

illness; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force, comprised of Physician Advisors, medical researchers, educators, business, community leaders, attorneys, complementary therapists, students, and patients will address these inequities by: disseminating the Seminar Report-Fibromyalgia: Awareness, Advocacy and Action; introducing a Legislative Bill that requires physician continuing education in Fibromyalgia in New York State; and introducing a Legislative Bill to develop a funded Fibromyalgia Center in the Capital District of New York State to provide education and accessible, complementary medical treatments not currently covered by insurance; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the challenging work of the Fibromyalgia Task Force, and commends each person who participates toward improving the lives of Fibromyalgia patients; and

WHEREAS, The community's focus on Fibromyalgia and its impact on patients' lives will help guarantee hope for a better future for people with Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the needs of those chronically ill people who suffer from Fibromyalgia, and urges all of our citizens to support the search for a cure and assist those individuals and families who deal with this devastating syndrome on a daily basis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 8-15, 2016, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York; International Institute for Human Empowerment, Inc.; Center for Rheumatology; Center for Natural Wellness; INTiDYN; and Buckley, Mendleson, Criscione, and Quinn, PC.