

BY: Senator SEPULVEDA

COMMEMORATING June 2018, as Russian Heritage Month

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those events which foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthen the fabric of the communities of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate June 2018, as Russian Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, The Annual Russian Heritage Month is a month-long series of events which celebrates and honors a rich diversity of cultural traditions brought to the United States from the many countries of the former Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, Russian Heritage Month was founded in 2002 by the Russian American Foundation and led by its President Marina Kovalyov and Vice President Rina Kirshner in collaboration with the City of New York and Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg; in addition, for the past six years, Russian American Foundation has partnered with the **New York Post**; and

WHEREAS, The festival began as a week-long series of events, celebrating cultural and economic contributions of the Russian-speaking community of New York, but today it has grown into an internationally recognized month-long celebration dedicated to promoting cross-community awareness, as well as a valuable local, national and international dialogue between peoples and cultures; and

WHEREAS, The Russian speaking community plays an indispensable role in the culture, economic and social life of New York, the United States and the world, and Russian Heritage Month honors their contributions and affords the opportunity to showcase their talents; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, Russian Heritage Month has become a unifying force of the community by allowing its members, who hail from across the former Soviet Union, to preserve their heritage, culture, and language while also expressing their cultural identity; and

WHEREAS, This annual celebration of arts and culture takes place throughout the month of June in New York; Russian Heritage Month is the only event of its kind in the United States, and every year attracts a large diverse audience to enjoy diverse cultural events, such as contemporary and folk music, dance performances, art exhibitions, public festivals, health and sports fairs, business expos, and more; and

WHEREAS, Many Russian Americans have made vital contributions to both the State of New York and the Nation; in addition to President Marina Kovalyov, some of these individuals include: Vladimir Dobrynin, CEO and President of Humans Net, Inc.; Yerlan Shakibayev, Founder of

Humans Net, Inc.; Roman Vnoukov, Principal at Design Studio Romani; Eugene Schneur, co-Founder of Omni New York; and Greg Gurevich, Managing Partner and Portfoli Manager at Maritime Capital LLC; and

WHEREAS, It is duly fitting that all New Yorkers join in these important celebrations of one of our State's most vibrant communities; this much anticipated observance and its accompanying activities will foster greater appreciation for Russian culture and serve to promote the spirit of cooperation that is characteristic of all citizens of New York State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate June 2018, as Russian Heritage Month; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Marina Kovalyov, President, Russian American Foundation.