

BY: Senator PERSAUD

MEMORIALIZING Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim
June 5, 2019, as World Environment 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 issues that affect the lives of citizens 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 memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim June 5, 2019, as World Environment Day in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, World Environment Day is the United Nation's most important day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment; since it began in 1974, it has grown to become a global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated in over 100 countries; and

WHEREAS, World Environment Day is the "people's day" for doing something to take care of the Earth; that "something" can be focused locally, nationally or globally; it can be a solo action or involve a crowd; everyone is free to choose; and

WHEREAS, World Environment Day is held every year to encourage people across the globe to re-think the way they use plastic on a daily basis; this year's theme, "If you can't reuse it, refuse it," invites us all to consider how we can make changes in our everyday lives to reduce the heavy burden of plastic pollution on our natural places, our wildlife, and our own health; and

WHEREAS, Plastic pollution has become an epidemic; every year, individuals throw away enough plastic to circle the Earth four times, and it can persist for up to 1,000 years before it fully disintegrates; and

WHEREAS, At any given time, an estimated 165 million plastic particles are floating in the estuaries which stretch from the Tappan Zee Bridge, along the lower Hudson River, south to Sandy Hook Bay, in New Jersey; that is more than 256,000 particles per square kilometer; and

WHEREAS, While plastic has many valuable uses, we have become over reliant on single-use or disposable plastic, with severe environmental consequences; around the world, one million plastic drinking bottles are purchased every minute, and 500 billion disposable plastic bags are used worldwide every year; in total, 50 percent of the plastic we use is single use; and

WHEREAS, Nearly one third of the plastic packaging we use escapes

collection systems, which means that it ends up clogging our city streets and polluting our natural environment; every year, up to 13 million tons of plastic leak into our oceans, where it smothers coral reefs and threatens vulnerable marine wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Plastic also makes its way into our water supply, and thus into our bodies; plastics contain a number of chemicals, many of which are toxic or disrupt hormones, and can also serve as a magnet for other pollutants, including dioxins, metals and pesticides; and

WHEREAS, If you can't reuse it, refuse it; there are so many things each and every person on this planet can do: ask restaurants to stop using plastic straws, bring your own coffee mug to work, pressure your local authorities to improve how they manage your city's waste, bring your own shopping bags to the supermarket, pressure food suppliers to use non-plastic packaging, refuse plastic cutlery, and pick up any plastic you see the next time you go for a walk on the beach; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious environmental issue, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, state, national and international levels to promote water conservation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim June 5, 2019, as World Environment 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 Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.