

BY: Senator MAYER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim August 7, 2019, as Assyrian Memorial Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim August 7, 2019, as Assyrian Memorial Day in the State of New York, as it is observed by Assyrians worldwide, celebrating the Assyrian cultural identity; and

WHEREAS, During the Assyrian Genocide of 1915-1918, 750,000 men, women, and children of Assyrian descent lost their lives at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Empire in its attempt to systematically eliminate the Assyrian race, while hundreds of thousands became homeless and stateless refugees; and

WHEREAS, August 7, 1933, is recognized by the International Association of Genocide Scholars as the date on which 3,000 thousand Assyrians were killed at the orders of the Iraqi government in an event known as the Simele Massacre, which continued the legacy of persecution exemplified by the 1915 Assyrian Genocide; and

WHEREAS, August 7th, globally observed by the Assyrian community as Assyrian Memorial Day, is in remembrance of the Simele Massacre and of all persecution the Assyrian people have faced as a result of their distinct and ancient ethnic and religious identity; and

WHEREAS, The Assyrian community continues to struggle in the face of adversity to maintain its distinct identity and its connection to its ancestral homeland of Mesopotamia; and

WHEREAS, Assyrians living around the world speak the over two-thousand-year-old Assyrian-Aramaic language and practice their distinct and ancient rite of Christianity; and recognition of their unique cultural identity and storied history, which has its roots in one of the world's first civilizations, helps keep the Assyrian identity alive; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York endeavors to champion human rights and the recognition of diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious identities, and to uphold the support that constituents have shown for underserved and persecuted minorities; and

WHEREAS, New York State is a leader in terms of progress and social justice; we acknowledge that this Resolution makes New York State the first state to recognize Assyrian Memorial Day, and to recognize the Assyrian Genocide as a distinct historical event; it is our hope that other states will follow this model and recognize these two important events; and

WHEREAS, By consistently remembering and forcefully condemning the

atrocities committed against the Assyrians and by honoring their cultural identity, we can provide the American public with a greater awareness of their struggles, and provide the Assyrian diaspora community with a symbol of hope for the future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim August 7, 2019, as Assyrian Memorial Day 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; and the Assyrian American Association of Yonkers.