

BY: M. of A. Santabarbara

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2022, as Autism Acceptance Month in the State of New York

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

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2022, as Autism Acceptance Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with National Autism Acceptance Month, and World Autism Acceptance Day, Saturday, April 2, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Autism is a spectrum disorder (ASD), defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum condition" that affects people differently and to varying degrees; it is a lifelong developmental disability that typically appears during early childhood and can impact a person's social skills, communication, relationships, and self-regulation; and

WHEREAS, Autism spectrum disorder affects an estimated 1 in 44 U.S. children and 1 in 45 U.S. adults and is a complex condition that affects each person differently, resulting in unique strengths and challenges; and

WHEREAS, While there is currently no known single cause of autism, early diagnosis helps a person receive the support and services they need, which can lead to a quality life filled with opportunity; and

WHEREAS, Although autism impacts people regardless of race or ethnicity, there are racial and ethnic disparities in diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, According to the CDC, ADDM reports have consistently noted more white children are identified with ASD than black or Hispanic children; previous studies have shown that stigma, lack of access to healthcare services due to non-citizenship or low-income, and non-English as primary language are potential barriers to the identification of children with ASD, especially among Hispanic children; and

WHEREAS, Currently, boys are also approximately 4.5 times more likely to have an autism diagnosis than girls of the same age; however, recent research suggests girls may not show autism in the same way as boys and might go undiagnosed; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1970s, the Autism Society of America began a nationwide awareness campaign which was adopted by Congress in 1984, and

strengthened by the release of the Autism Awareness ribbon in 1999; and

WHEREAS, Each April for the past five decades, National Autism Awareness Month has educated the public about autism and the challenges of those within the autism community; and

WHEREAS, The spotlight shining on autism, as a result, has opened opportunities for the nation to consider how to serve people on the autism spectrum and their families; and

WHEREAS, The goal of Autism Awareness Month was to promote autism awareness and assure that all affected by autism are able to achieve the highest quality of life possible, which has now evolved into Autism Acceptance Month to continue those efforts to spread awareness and also promote acceptance and ignite change; and

WHEREAS, Those in the autism community still face significant unmet needs and it is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this health issue, this year we continue our efforts to build a better awareness of the signs, symptoms, and realities of autism, and also provide information and resources for communities to be more aware of autism, promote acceptance, and be more inclusive in everyday life at the local, State and national levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2022, as Autism Acceptance Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with National Autism Acceptance Month; 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.