Senate Resolution No. 1002

BY: Senator CHU

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, Asian and Asian Pacific Islander Americans have contributed greatly to the wealth and cultural heritage of our great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Asian Pacific American Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, Asian Pacific Islander Americans comprise many ethnicities and languages, and their myriad achievements embody the American experience; and

WHEREAS, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have fostered enterprise to include many of our Nation's most successful and dynamic businesses; these men and women are leaders in every aspect of American life such as government, industry, science, medicine, the arts, our Armed Forces, education, and sports; and

WHEREAS, New York received some of the first Asian arrivals in the early 1800s; sailors and traders of the China trade route became an essential part of the port culture that formed in New York City, the city of immigrants and the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, New York is home to Asian and Asian Pacific Islanders from all parts of the Asian continent and Pacific Islands, including Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, the Philippines, Samoa, Fiji, Guam, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress passed a joint Congressional Resolution in 1978, to commemorate Asian and Asian Pacific American Heritage Week during the first week of May; this date was chosen because two important anniversaries occurred during this time: the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in America on May 7, 1843, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad by Chinese laborers on May 10, 1869; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, Congress voted to expand it from a week to a month-long celebration; in May 1992, the month of May was permanently designated as "Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month"; and

WHEREAS, There are many notable Asian and Asian Pacific Islander Americans from New York, some of whom include: Yuri Kochiyama, activist and founder of Asian Americans for Action; Tammy Duckworth, first Thai American woman and first woman with a disability elected to Congress;

I.M. Pei, Chinese American architect and winner of the Pritzker Prize; Min Jin Lee, renowned Korean American author and journalist; Philip Vera Cruz, Filipino labor leader and civil rights advocate; and Kamala Harris, first woman, African American, and South Asian American to serve as Vice President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to a 2022 report, Asian Americans of the Empire State: Growing Diversity and Common Needs, from the Asian American Federation, the Asian population in New York State grew fastest outside of New York City; the number of Asian residents in the suburban counties surrounding New York City grew by 47% and those in counties outside of the New York City metro area grew by 56%; and

WHEREAS, With the population growth upstate came increased diversity; Burmese Americans went from being too few to be reported to the sixth largest Asian group in upstate counties in 2010; and

WHEREAS, By recognizing the accomplishments and contributions of Asian and Asian Pacific Americans, this great Empire State reaffirms our commitment to diversity and equal opportunity for all, thereby ensuring a bright future for all New Yorkers and Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in the State of New York; 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.