Senate Resolution No. 2321

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim June 19, 2024, as Juneteenth Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, Juneteenth (short for "June nineteenth") is a holiday commemorating this day, which marked the effective end of slavery in the United States in the year of 1865 in Galveston, Texas; and

WHEREAS, On that day, one of General Granger's first orders was Order No. 3 which was read aloud to the people of Texas and stated: "The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equity of rights and rights of property between masters and former slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer."; and

WHEREAS, The celebration of Juneteenth allowed freed slaves and their descendants to recount the memories of that great day in 1865 when freedom was proclaimed, and also served as a release from the pressures of settling into new territories; and

WHEREAS, While Juneteenth is a time for celebration, it is also a time for reflection, education, and self-improvement; celebration participants listen to elders recount the past, attend prayer services, and learn from educational speakers; and

WHEREAS, Today, Juneteenth celebrates African American freedom and achievements while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all cultures; and

WHEREAS, It takes on a more national, symbolic, and even global perspective; the events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten for all of the roots tie back to this fertile soil from which a national day of pride is growing; and

WHEREAS, In 1980, the State of Texas was the first state to recognize Juneteenth as an official state holiday, through the efforts of Al Edwards, an African American State Legislator; and

WHEREAS, In 1997, Congress recognized June 19 as "Juneteenth Independence Day"; and

WHEREAS, The National Juneteenth Observance Foundation, founded and chaired by the Reverend Ronald Meyers, was committed to making Juneteenth a federal holiday on par with Flag and Patriot days; on June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, making Juneteenth Day a federal holiday for the first time in our Nation's history; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth looks bright as the number of cities and states

creating Juneteenth committees continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, Cities in New York that have had Juneteenth celebrations include Albany, Binghamton, Bronx, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Rochester, Schenectady, Syracuse, and Yonkers, with more celebrating each year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim June 19, 2024, as Juneteenth Day in New York State; 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.