Senate Resolution No. 73

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 18, 2023, as HIV Vaccine Awareness 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 public health 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 Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 18, 2023, as HIV Vaccine Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National HIV Vaccine Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (HVAD) is an annual event established to recognize and thank the thousands of volunteers, community members, health professionals, and scientists who are working together to find a safe and effective HIV vaccine; it is also a day to educate our Nation's communities about the importance of preventive HIV vaccine research; and

WHEREAS, More than 36 million people worldwide are living with HIV, and more than 20 million lives have been lost due to HIV and AIDS related illness; the need for an HIV vaccine remains urgent; once infected, most people will eventually need to stay on treatment for the rest of their lives; and

WHEREAS, In addition, treatments are complex, costly, and only slow the disease, there is no cure; to ensure the end of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, prevention is essential; and

WHEREAS, A vaccine helps our body learn how to fight off a virus, such as HIV; a preventive HIV vaccine would protect HIV-negative people from being infected with the disease; and

WHEREAS, The long-term goal is to develop a vaccine that protects everyone from getting infected with HIV, however, even a vaccine that protects only some people would still be very helpful; such a vaccine could decrease the number of people who are infected with HIV, which would reduce the number of people who can pass the virus on to others; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, researchers are looking to see whether HIV vaccines could help people who are already infected with HIV; if effective, such a vaccine would teach the body to control HIV infection, so the progression from silent HIV infection to full-blown AIDS would happen much more slowly or could even be stopped; and

WHEREAS, The 2023 targets include reducing the number of people dying from HIV-related causes to fewer than 500,000; based on current

estimates, this provides an opportunity to prevent over 400,000 deaths per year; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, community activities and media events will be held across the United States to educate communities throughout the country on the importance of preventative HIV and AIDS research; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious public health issue, and more must be done to increase activity 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 May 18, 2023, as HIV Vaccine Awareness 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 Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York.