Senate Resolution No. 91

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Mental Health Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, The State of New York takes great pride in participating in events designed to raise awareness of serious health issues; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Mental Health Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Mental Health Month (MHM) began in 1949, to raise awareness of mental health conditions and mental wellness for all; and

WHEREAS, Mental illness is common, yet many never get help; 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year, yet only 43 percent of people with a mental illness receive treatment; furthermore, for those who ultimately do get help, the average delay in getting treatment is 11 years from the first onset of symptoms; and

WHEREAS, The first signs and symptoms of mental health problems, some of which develop to the point of becoming diagnosable mental illness begin on average, at about 14 years of age; and

WHEREAS, Untreated mental illness has serious consequences; this is a serious problem because unrecognized, untreated and late treated mental illness elevates the risk of mental health crises such as suicide and self-injury, diminishes prospects for recovery and contributes to substance abuse and other damaging negative coping behaviors; and

WHEREAS, Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 10-34, and the overall suicide rate in the U.S. has increased by 31 percent since 2001; and

WHEREAS, More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease combined; and

WHEREAS, Many adults miss or dismiss these early signs and symptoms and young people are even less likely to recognize or understand what is happening to them; and even when there is some recognition that a young person is struggling, stigma often causes people to ignore, dismiss or rationalize a child's true need for help; the result is often as tragic as it is unnecessary; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing and underlying mental illness, with 50 percent of Americans reporting a negative impact on their mental health; and

WHEREAS, In these trying times, it is more imperative than ever to

recognize and destigmatize mental illness; and

WHEREAS, There must be greater public awareness of mental illness and suicide, and more must be done at the local, State and national levels to respond to the rise in mental health concerns during and after this crisis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May of 2023, as Mental Health 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.