Assembly Resolution No. 451

BY: M. of A. DeStefano

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Wildfire Safety Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of serious environmental disasters 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, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 2023, as Wildfire Safety Awareness Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Wildfire Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, National Wildfire Awareness Month dedicates the entire month of May to increasing prevention and preparedness for wildfires throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Interagency Fire Center, humans cause an average of 68% of fires per year in the United States; of those human-started fires, 2.8 million acres burn each year; in 2018, 8,767,492 acres burned due to human-started fires and lightning strikes; and

WHEREAS, There are steps to take to prevent wildfires; from using fire resisting building materials to following the safety protocols for handling fire when camping, heating your home or storing fuel, all New Yorkers can take part in reducing wildfires; and

WHEREAS, While wildfires may not be prevalent in every state, the responsibility to be aware and alert belongs to everyone; the causes of wildfires can occur in every state, and as mobile as our lifestyles have become, everyone needs to be prepared; and

WHEREAS, Before a wildfire, purchase a battery-powered radio to receive information from local authorities during a power outage; find an outdoor water source such as a pond, well, even a swimming pool, and have a hose that can reach any area of your property; create a fire-resistant zone free of leaves, debris or flammable materials for at least 30 feet out from your home; regularly clean roofs and gutters; make sure driveway entrances and your house number are clearly marked so fire vehicles can get to your home; designate a room that can be closed off from outside air; close all doors and windows; set up a portable air cleaner to keep indoor pollution levels low when smoky conditions exist; use fire-resistant materials to build, renovate or make repairs; and post emergency phone numbers by every phone in your house and make sure everyone has those numbers in their cell phones; and

WHEREAS, If you have to leave your neighborhood, be prepared to

evacuate at a moment's notice and obey all evacuation orders from officials; also, shut all windows and doors and remove flammable window shades, curtains and close metal shutters; move flammable furniture to

the center of the room, away from windows and doors; shut off gas at the meter, turn off pilot lights, shut off the air conditioning; gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (patio furniture, toys, trash cans); turn off propane tanks and move propane BBQ appliances away from structures; do not leave sprinklers on or water running, they can affect critical water pressure; back your loaded car into the driveway and keep all doors and windows closed; ensure your emergency supplies kit is in your vehicle; and locate your pets and take them with you; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater awareness of both the prevention and preparedness of wildfires, 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 2023, as Wildfire Safety Awareness Month in the State of New York; and be if further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York.