Assembly Resolution No. 548

BY: M. of A. Cunningham

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 26, 2023, as Guyana Flag Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay just tribute to the cultural heritage of the ethnic groups which comprise and contribute to the richness and diversity of the community of the State of New York; 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 26, 2023, as Guyana Flag Day, in conjunction with the 57th Anniversary of the Independence of Guyana; and

WHEREAS, The flag of Guyana represents the country's rich history; the golden arrowhead represents the journey to independence and the colors of the flag represent different industries in the country; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2020 Census/American Community Survey, 122,820 Guyanese people live in New York State; in fact, the majority of Guyanese Americans live in New York City, constituting the second-largest Guyanese population in the world after the Guyanese capital of Georgetown, with large communities in South Queens, Central and Southeast Brooklyn, and the Southeast Bronx; and

WHEREAS, The Co-operative Republic of Guyana is a vibrant and prosperous nation in the Caribbean region that enjoys friendly relations with our great State and Nation, serving as a partner in trade, diplomacy, culture, and security; and

WHEREAS, As a result of successive waves of settlement, Guyana is home to an incredibly diverse population, primarily consisting of Indo-Guyanese descended from South Asia, Afro-Guyanese descended from Africa, Amerindians, people of mixed ancestry, and descendants of European and Chinese workers; and

WHEREAS, Guyana gained independence from the United Kingdom on May 26, 1966; on this date at midnight, the British flag in National Park was lowered and the Guyanese flag was raised, followed by a ceremony in Parliament where the Duke of Kent presented the Constitutional Instruments to Prime Minister Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham; and

WHEREAS, Guyana is the only country in South America with English as the official language; however, many residents speak Guyanese Creole; and

WHEREAS, From the very beginning, the Guyanese have celebrated Independence Day with elaborate celebrations such as carnivals, parades, fireworks, exhibitions, and rallies; and the Guyanese American community

in New York City celebrates with an Independence Parade, among other festivities; and

WHEREAS, One of the greatest testaments to the contributions of Guyanese New Yorkers is the neighborhood of Little Guyana, running along Liberty Avenue in South Queens, which is home to a bustling Indo-Guyanese community and numerous restaurants and small businesses; and in 2021, New York City honored the neighborhood by co-naming Liberty Avenue as "Little Guyana Avenue"; and

WHEREAS, Guyana Flag Day, along with the 57th Anniversary of Guyana's Independence, provides an opportunity to recognize the significance of their contributions to the quality and character of life, and, through events and activities, for all people to gain a greater appreciation of Guyanese history and traditions, and of the role the Guyanese have played, and will continue to play, in our society; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to recognize such events of significance which foster ethnic pride and exemplify the cultural diversity that represents and strengthens the fabric of the people and the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 26, 2023, as Guyana Flag Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Guyanese Consul General and various Guyanese organizations in the State of New York.