Assembly Resolution No. 623

BY: M. of A. Hunter

COMMEMORATING the 50th Anniversary of St. Sophia's Greek Cultural Festival

WHEREAS, Fairs and festivals empower communities to attract new visitors while capitalizing on local commercial and cultural value; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and support events of significance which contribute to the entertainment and vitality of the communities they serve, and which exemplify the history and development 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 commemorate the 50th Anniversary of St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church's Greek Cultural Festival; and

WHEREAS, Established in 1917, St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church has grown from a handful of families emigrating from Greece, Asia Minor and other areas to a community of approximately 600 families; through the years, the Church has been housed in three buildings and has been led by 20 different priests; and

WHEREAS, Syracuse's Festival of Nations, which began in 1969, increased community awareness of different ethnicities and, by extension, resulted in greater appreciation of Greek culture in Central New York; and

WHEREAS, First held from September 28-30, 1973, the annual St. Sophia's Greek Cultural Festival is an opportunity for the congregation to share their rich culture with others as well as help keep the traditions alive for their children and future generations; and

WHEREAS, Sustained by the love of their faith and culture, many parishioners have worked hard throughout the year to make the festival a success; as a result of their efforts, it has become the most successful church festival in the area, and people mark their calendars months ahead to attend this great event; and

WHEREAS, The parish children and young adults practice for countless hours to perfect their dances and provide the much-anticipated entertainment which includes live music and singing, and the parish priest and some laypeople give tours of the church and explain Orthodoxy to those who are interested; the festival also gives visitors an opportunity to try a variety of delicious Greek food, especially the pastries; and

WHEREAS, An important part of Central New York, the four-day festival draws over 10,000 visitors each year who love to dance, sing, and eat, and simply enjoy life; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those events which have brought entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of St. Sophia's Greek Cultural Festival; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church's Greek Cultural Festival Committee.