Assembly Resolution No. 63

BY: M. of A. Cunningham

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 3, 2022, as Four Chaplains Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, February 3, 2023, is the 80th Anniversary of the sinking of the United States Army transport Dorchester, an event that resulted in the loss of nearly 700 lives in 1943 and for which witnesses have recounted in the Congressional Record the heroism of Four Chaplains of different faiths, Lieutenant George L. Fox, Methodist; Lieutenant Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lieutenant John P. Washington, Catholic; and Lieutenant Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed; and

WHEREAS, One of the four heroes, Lieutenant Alexander D. Goode was born in Brooklyn, New York, on May 10, 1911; his father, Hyman Goodekowitz, was a prominent Brooklyn rabbi; and

WHEREAS, Each of the Four Chaplains was awarded the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously; the citation of each reads: "For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an enemy of the United States. On the night of the 3rd of February, 1943, a loaded troop transport was torpedoed, without warning, by an enemy submarine in the North Atlantic and began to sink rapidly. In the resulting confusion and darkness some men found themselves without life jackets and others became helpless through fear and the dread of plunging into the freezing water. These Four Chaplains heroically and calmly moved about the deck, encouraging the men and assisting them to abandon ship; after the available supply of life jackets was exhausted, they gave up their own; they remained aboard ship and went down with it, offering words of encouragement and prayers to the last"; and

WHEREAS, On the corner of Broad and Berks Streets in Philadelphia, in the heart of Temple University, is the Chapel of the Four Chaplains; it is a memorial to the Four Chaplains who went down on the S.S. Dorchester during World War II; it is an interfaith shrine; in it are three remembrances, one for each faith -- Catholic, Jewish and Protestant; at the entrance burns an eternal light which calls all to the unity these Four Chaplains so heroically demonstrated; chiseled deep into the stone is this dedication:

Chapel of Four Chaplains
An Interfaith shrine
Here is Sanctuary for Brotherhood
Let it never be violated; and

WHEREAS, On July 14, 1960, the United States Congress awarded a special medal for valor, given in memory of the Four Chaplains, never to be repeated; a memorial tribute to the Four Chaplains in the form of a commemorative coin-medal was presented to the Chapel by the National Commemorative Society; numerous stained glass windows, paintings,

buildings and statues have been dedicated to the Four Chaplains; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that these Four Chaplains, who removed their own life jackets and gave them to others to save their lives and who were last seen arm-in-arm in prayer on the hull of the ship, demonstrated a unique ecumenical spirit and love for their fellow man and should never be forgotten; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim February 3, 2023, as Four Chaplains Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York; and to the American Legion.