Assembly Resolution No. 697

BY: M. of A. Brabenec

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 2023, as German-American Heritage Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom 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 keeping with its time-honored traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 2023, as German-American Heritage Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, In the 1670s, the first significant groups of German immigrants arrived in the British colonies, settling primarily in New York and Pennsylvania; immigration continued in very large numbers during the 19th Century, with eight million arrivals from Germany; and

WHEREAS, Many Germans arrived in North America seeking religious or political freedom, others for economic opportunities greater than those in Europe, and others for the chance to start fresh in the New World; and

WHEREAS, The arrivals before 1850 were mostly farmers who sought out the most productive land, where their intensive farming techniques would pay off; after 1840, many came to cities, where Germania, German-speaking districts, soon emerged; and

WHEREAS, German-Americans established the first kindergartens in the United States, introduced the Christmas tree tradition, and originated popular American foods such as hot dogs and hamburgers; and

WHEREAS, Today, German-American celebrations are held throughout the country, one of the most well-known being the German-American Steuben Parade in New York City, held every third Saturday in September; traditional Oktoberfest celebrations and the German-American Day are also popular festivities; and

WHEREAS, Currently, German-Americans make up 11.1% of New York's population, and approximately 49 million German-Americans live throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, German-Americans have made significant contributions to American society as doctors, politicians, musicians, athletes, and teachers; and

WHEREAS, Based in New York City, German-American John Peter Zenger began publication of the **New York Weekly Journal** in 1733; the paper, backed by several prominent lawyers and merchants, attacked the

administration of the British Royal Governor of New York, William Cosby; and

WHEREAS, Responsible for the content of the paper, John Peter Zenger was arrested on libel charges and imprisoned in 1734; in the trial that followed, he was defended by Andrew Hamilton, who established truth as a defense in cases of libel; the trial, which resulted in the publisher's acquittal, helped to establish freedom of the press in America; and

WHEREAS, Another famous German-American was Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower, the 34th President of the United States from 1953-1961, as well as a decorated General in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, Dwight David Eisenhower served as Supreme Commander of the Allied forces in Europe, with responsibility for planning and supervising the successful invasion of France and Germany in 1944-1945; in 1951, he became the first Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and

WHEREAS, German-American Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the aspirations and values that have been shared with the German people for generations, and to recognize the countless contributions of Americans and New Yorkers of German descent to every aspect of society; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 2023, as German-American Heritage 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.