Assembly Resolution No. 899

BY: M. of A. Buttenschon

COMMEMORATING the 32nd Anniversary of the Independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on March 1, 2024

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 commemorate the 32nd Anniversary of the Independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on Wednesday, March 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Known locally as Dan nezavisnosti, this public holiday is marked by parades, cultural pageants, speeches, historical lessons, Bosnian cuisines, and traditional folk dances; family and friends celebrate with get-togethers and picnics, culminating in an evening of fireworks and concerts; and

WHEREAS, Following the end of the First World War and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) joined the South Slav Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, which was renamed Yugoslavia; and

WHEREAS, After an economic and political crisis in the 1980s and the rise of nationalism, Yugoslavia broke up along its republics' borders at the start of the 1990s; and

WHEREAS, Bosnia and Herzegovina became independent from the former Yugoslavia when a referendum was held on February 29, 1992, and March 1, 1992; most Serbs boycotted the referendum, while 99.7% of the remaining population voted for independence; and

WHEREAS, Independence was officially declared on March 3, 1992, and Bosnia and Herzegovina were admitted as a member state of the United Nations on May 22, 1992; unfortunately, this resulted in a political upheaval which would eventually turn into a bloody and brutal war; and

WHEREAS, Between 1992 and 2007, the State Department resettled 131,000 refugees from war-torn Bosnia and Herzegovina in the United States, 8,000 of whom were resettled in Utica, New York, where they have rebuilt their own community; and

WHEREAS, The 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement divided post-war Bosnia into two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska; and

WHEREAS, Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina celebrates its relationship with Europe and focuses on its main objective of becoming a member of

the European Union; and

WHEREAS, The 32nd Anniversary of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Independence provides an opportunity for citizens to raise their flags of white, blue and yellow, to remember the innocent victims who lost their lives in their quest for freedom, and 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 Bosnian history and traditions, and of the role Bosnians 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 commemorate the 32nd Anniversary of the Independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.