Assembly Resolution No. 906

BY: M. of A. Jean-Pierre

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 2024, as Women's History Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, March is Women's History Month; and

WHEREAS, March 8th is International Women's Day; and

WHEREAS, Each year New York State officially sets aside time to recognize the unique contributions that New York women have made to New York State and beyond; and

WHEREAS, New York State has a distinguished history of monumental achievements in the area of women's rights; and

WHEREAS, In 1826, New York State opened one of the first public high schools for girls resulting in a future for women in which they were no longer confined to the home, a future in which they were educated and able to use this education to better their social and economic status; and

WHEREAS, In 1848 in New York, the first women's rights convention was held at Seneca Falls to secure for all women the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, In 1903, The Women's Trade Union League of New York was formed to represent working women, later becoming the nucleus for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; and

WHEREAS, In 1917, New York guaranteed women the right to vote in all elections and in the following year the first two women, Ida Sammis and Mary Lilly, were elected to the New York State Legislature and became the first women to then serve in 1919; and

WHEREAS, In 1955, Bessie Buchanan was the first African-American woman to serve in the New York State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, In 1967, Muriel Siebert became the first woman to own a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, opening the door for women to gain positions of greater economic power; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, New York State Assemblywoman Shirley Chisholm became the first Black woman elected to Congress and in 1972, she ran for President of the United States, another first for Black women; and

WHEREAS, In 1970, New York City was the site of the first Women's Strike for Equality in which 50,000 people marched for equal rights; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, Olga Mendez became the first Latina woman to serve in the New York State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, In 1983, New York State women legislators established the Legislative Women's Caucus to improve the participation of women in all areas of government, support issues that benefit women and provide a network of support for women in the State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, Ellen Young was the first Asian-American woman to serve in the New York State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, In 2009, New Yorker Sonia Sotomayor became the first Hispanic Justice appointed to the United States Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, In 2015, New Yorker Loretta Elizabeth Lynch was appointed as Attorney General of the United States, becoming the first African-American woman to serve in this esteemed position; and

WHEREAS, New York has been the home of many extraordinary women who have led society to a better future: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony led the campaign for women's suffrage; Sojourner Truth spoke out for the abolition of slavery and for suffrage for all women; and

WHEREAS, Carrie Chapman Catt became the first president of the League of Women Voters; Emma Willard opened the first endowed institution for the education of women; Civil War surgeon Dr. Mary E. Walker was the only woman ever awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor; Harriet Tubman was an abolitionist who led slaves to freedom by way of the Underground Railroad in the 19th Century; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Blackwell and Belva Lockwood were the first women in the fields of medicine and law; pioneer birth control educator and advocate Margaret Sanger established a research center in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Emma Goldman founded the Free Speech League which led to the American Civil Liberties Union; humanitarian Eleanor Roosevelt served as United States Delegate to the United Nations; and

WHEREAS, New Yorker Edith Windsor fought to expand marriage equality in the United States prior to the Marriage Equality Act of New York which became law in 2011; and

WHEREAS, Civil rights lawyer and New York State Senator Constance Baker Motley became the first Black woman to sit on the U.S. District Court in New York, and there have been so many more known and unknown women who championed rights and opportunity for all; and

WHEREAS, New York State has hosted many conventions, campaigns and events of the Women's Rights Movement from the 1848 convention at Seneca Falls, to the 1999 Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, which was held to improve the status of women in history and in the historical professions; and

WHEREAS, 50% of statewide elected officials are women and for the first time, a woman has been elected Attorney General in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, 2024 marks the 104th Anniversary of the 19th amendment, which guaranteed women the right to vote in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Today, 72 women serve in the New York State Legislature, making up 48% of the seats, holding leadership positions in both houses and bringing the diverse experiences of women into law and public policy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 2024, as Women's History Month 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 the Legislative Women's Caucus of New York State.