Assembly Resolution No. 921

BY: M. of A. Darling

RECOGNIZING Sunday, March 10, 2024, as Harriet Tubman Day

WHEREAS, Harriet Ross Tubman was an American heroine and patriot, who faithfully served her country and liberated her people; her tireless efforts to attain freedom for those enslaved, and her dedication to stop the inhuman practice of slavery, should be recognized and celebrated; it is only fitting to pay tribute to an American heroine, who sacrificed everything for the well being of her people and country; and

WHEREAS, In June of 2003, legislation was signed into law to make March 10th a Day of Commemoration; March 10th recognizes the lifetime achievements and the historical legacy established by Harriet Tubman, and her many accomplishments throughout New York State; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Ross Tubman, the great American abolitionist, was born around 1820, on a plantation in Dorchester County, Maryland; as was the case of many slaves, she was put to work as a field hand at an early age; and

WHEREAS, Because of her color and her status as a slave, Harriet Tubman was denied the opportunity to learn to read or write; nevertheless, she was able to rise above the limitations that were placed on her as a slave and as a black woman; and

WHEREAS, In 1849, Harriet Tubman escaped to the North and settled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; while in Philadelphia, she met William Still, the Philadelphia Stationmaster of the "Underground Railroad"; it was William Still along with the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society that introduced Harriet Tubman to the inner workshops of the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, The Underground Railroad was a network of families and people that offered assistance, food, or shelter to slaves, during their escape to the North; one year after her escape, Harriet Tubman became a conductor (guide who led escaped slaves to freedom) on the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, In 1851, Harriet Tubman relocated members of her family to North Street in St. Catharine's, Ontario, Canada; this eventually became her headquarters for the Underground Railroad; in the ensuing years, Harriet Tubman became one of the most influential conductors; and

WHEREAS, In the mid-1850s Harriet Tubman made the acquaintance of United States Senator, Secretary of State and former New York Governor William H. Seward and his wife, Frances, in Auburn, New York; the Sewards in 1857 provided a home for Harriet Tubman in Auburn, New York, which was later sold to her; and

WHEREAS, This new home was to become the new base of operations for

the Underground Railroad; when the Civil War began, Harriet Tubman was able to liberate hundreds of her people to freedom through this efficient network; she was proud to claim that she never ran her train off the track and never lost a passenger; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman served as a cook in the Union Army in South Carolina, a nurse, a scout for raiding parties, and a spy behind confederate lines; after her service to the Union Army, she returned to Auburn, New York, where she lived the remaining years of her life; in 1903, she transferred ownership of her property to the A.M.E. Zion Church; and

WHEREAS, After Harriet Tubman's death on March 10, 1913, the church developed and managed her home and adjacent property in order to sustain her memory; Harriet Tubman was buried in Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York, with full military honors; currently, the Harriet Tubman home and property are registered as National Historic Landmarks in Auburn, and the site is also part of the National Parks Service Freedom Trail; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman was many things to many people, but to the Black slaves, she was considered to be the "Black Moses" who delivered them the buried promise of freedom; through her actions and life, she embodied the true essence of service, spirit and strength; because of her spirit, strength and conviction, countless slaves were given hope; she was compelled to risk her own freedom so that others could experience freedom; and

WHEREAS, With the establishment of this Day of Commemoration, the rich historical legacy and life achievements of Harriet Tubman are recognized and celebrated in New York each year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize Sunday, March 10, 2024, as Harriet Tubman Day.