

BY: Senator FERNANDEZ

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
May 10-16, 2026, as Prevention Week in the State of
New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official weeks that are set aside to increase awareness of serious issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 10-16, 2026, as Prevention Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Prevention Week; and

WHEREAS, Recognition of this annual designation helps to encourage communities to raise awareness about substance use and misuse and mental health concerns, foster partnerships and collaborations with organizations dedicated to preventing substance abuse and mental health issues, and promote and disseminate prevention resources; and

WHEREAS, National Prevention Week is a public education platform showcasing the work of communities and organizations across the country that are preventing substance use and misuse while promoting positive mental health; and

WHEREAS, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) created a new, ongoing virtual series to showcase, elevate, and celebrate the important prevention ideas, events, news, and activities that impact communities across the country; throughout the year, the series will focus on spotlighting prevention organizations and cultivating social innovation to address the needs of communities and the young people who reside within them; and

WHEREAS, Schools and local communities are encouraged to take part in prevention-themed events prior to the end of the school year to help raise awareness about the potential harms of substance use and abuse among students and individuals of all ages; and

WHEREAS, Opioids, such as heroin, prescription painkillers, and illicitly manufactured fentanyl, have become an ever-growing concern in New York State; fentanyl is now the most common drug involved in overdose deaths; in 2020, 1,580 New Yorkers died from a fentanyl-involved overdose; and

WHEREAS, Fentanyl increasingly can be found across the United States and is often added to other substances or replaces other substances entirely, commonly without the knowledge of the end-user; due to its severe potency, just three milligrams of fentanyl can prove fatal, providing a new complexity to the already multifaceted opioid epidemic; and

WHEREAS, The number of people who died from a drug overdose in 2021 was over six times the number in 1999; the number of drug overdose deaths increased more than 16% from 2020 to 2021, with over 75% of the nearly 107,000 total drug overdose deaths in 2021 involving an opioid; and

WHEREAS, Harm reduction strategies are essential in keeping people alive and decreasing potential harms for people who are using opioids; syringe services programs, overdose prevention and intervention, including naloxone and fentanyl test strip distribution, and medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) help address the immediate health and safety needs of people who use opioids; and

WHEREAS, One of the primary goals of the SAMHSA is fostering partnerships and collaborations with federal agencies and national organizations dedicated to improving public health; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services offers important information, tips, and resources to help parents, schools, and members of the community keep young people safe from alcohol, drugs, and problem gambling through initiatives such as its Talk2Prevent, Combat Heroin, and Prescription Drug Abuse campaigns and websites; and

WHEREAS, Through this observance, this Legislative Body also recognizes substance abuse prevention providers throughout New York State and their important work in reducing the risks associated with such abuse, as well as their dedication to prevention efforts along these lines; and

WHEREAS, All New Yorkers are encouraged to join in supporting the goal to keep all citizens of this noble State and Nation healthy, safe, and informed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pauses in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 10-16, 2026, as Prevention Week 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 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.