

**BY:** Senator GRIFFO

**MEMORIALIZING** Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 2026 as Italian-American Heritage Month in the State of New York

**WHEREAS,** It is the sense of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize occasions which foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of New York State; and

**WHEREAS,** Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 2026 as Italian-American Heritage Month in the State of New York; and

**WHEREAS,** More than 26 million Americans of Italian descent currently reside in the United States, making them the fifth-largest ethnic group in the Nation; this month-long celebration recognizes the many contributions and achievements of Italian Americans, as well as their enduring impact on countless facets of our shared experiences, including in the arts, humanities, and sciences; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1989, Italian-American Heritage Month was first celebrated by a special proclamation of both the United States Congress and former President George H.W. Bush; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1880, Italians began migrating to the United States to flee rural poverty in southern Italy and Sicily; October is the designated month of recognition as it coincides with Columbus Day, the national holiday named after famed explorer, Christopher Columbus, which is celebrated on the second Monday of October annually; and

**WHEREAS,** In the early 1900s, thousands of Italian immigrants came to the United States in search of a better life like many other immigrant groups; approximately 5,500,000 Italians immigrated to the United States between 1820 and 2004; the greatest influx of migration took place between 1880 and 1920 when more than 4,000,000 Italians came to America; and

**WHEREAS,** The largest influx of Italian immigrants arrived when coal mining companies were recruiting thousands of men to work the deep mines of West Virginia; Italian immigrants also found work on railroads and farms; it was typical of the men to migrate to America first, subsequently sending for their wives and children after they had saved enough money; and

**WHEREAS,** By the second half of the century, Italian Americans excelled in every career field, inclusive of law, medicine, teaching, and the arts; religion and family have also remained important facets of Italian-American heritage throughout the years; and

**WHEREAS,** Each year, Italians across the country take time to celebrate their heritage, history, and culture with festivals and parades; the largest parade occurs in New York City on Columbus Day, attracting more than 35,000 marchers; and

**WHEREAS,** In the new millennium, more Italian Americans are rediscovering their roots, returning to Italy to seek out a relative, baptismal records, or a myriad of other familial references; and

**WHEREAS,** Italian-American Heritage Month celebrates centuries of Italy's culture and the Italian peoples' glorious historical past, the wealth of their present, and the opportunities of their future; and

**WHEREAS,** This auspicious month provides an opportunity to celebrate the significant contributions of Italian Americans so all people may know and appreciate Italian history and traditions, as well as the role Italian Americans have played, and will continue to play, in our society; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 2026 as Italian-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.