

**BY:** Senator BRISPORT

**RECOGNIZING** Second Chance Month in the State of New York, and recognizing the profound mental health impacts of incarceration on individuals, families, and communities

**WHEREAS,** The State of New York is committed to promoting the health and well-being of all its residents; and

**WHEREAS,** Mental health is an essential component of overall health, affecting individuals' ability to lead fulfilling lives, maintain relationships, and contribute to their communities; and

**WHEREAS,** Second Chance Month has been observed each April since 2017 to bring awareness to the multitude of barriers formerly incarcerated individuals face during the process of reentry, especially those related to mental health; and

**WHEREAS,** Incarceration has been shown to have severe and lasting psychological effects, including increased rates of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and other mental health challenges; and

**WHEREAS,** Isolation, exposure to violence, family separation, uncertainty, and restricted access to adequate healthcare can exacerbate existing mental health conditions and contribute to new ones; and

**WHEREAS,** Solitary confinement and prolonged isolation in particular have been widely documented to cause significant psychological harm; and

**WHEREAS,** The mental health impacts of incarceration extend beyond those directly incarcerated, affecting families, children, and communities, and contributing to cycles of trauma and instability; and

**WHEREAS,** Formerly incarcerated individuals often face significant barriers to accessing mental health care upon reentry, including stigma, lack of insurance coverage, and limited continuity of care; and

**WHEREAS,** Addressing the mental health consequences of incarceration is essential to advancing public health, reducing recidivism, and promoting successful reintegration; and

**WHEREAS,** New York State has an ongoing responsibility to ensure humane conditions of confinement, expand access to mental health services, and invest in alternatives to incarceration that prioritize treatment and support; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize the significant mental health trauma associated with incarceration and calls for increased awareness, research, and policy responses to address these harms, so that New York State can truly embody the spirit of Second Chance Month; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Silent Cry, Inc.