Senate Resolution No. 238

BY: Senator MURRAY

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim September 2025, as Dystonia Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of serious illnesses that affect the lives of citizens 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 September 2025, as Dystonia Awareness Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Dystonia Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, Dystonia is a disorder that causes muscles in the body to contract and spasm involuntarily; individuals affected by this disorder cannot control or predict the movement of their bodies; and

WHEREAS, Dystonia is characterized by persistent or intermittent muscle contractions causing abnormal, often repetitive, movements, postures, or both; the movements are usually patterned and twisting, and may resemble a tremor; and

WHEREAS, This disorder is often initiated or worsened by voluntary movements, and symptoms may "overflow" into adjacent muscles; furthermore, dystonia is classified by clinical characteristics and cause, including changes or damage to the nervous system and inheritance; doctors use these classifications to guide diagnosis and treatment; and

WHEREAS, Symptoms of dystonia are usually chronic but may also appear only during "attacks" or episodes, in which case the dystonia is termed paroxysmal; sometimes symptoms occur only during certain movements such as walking, speaking or playing a musical instrument; and

WHEREAS, These symptoms may also affect a specific part of the body or many parts simultaneously, and may also be painful; and

WHEREAS, Although the cause of dystonia is not known, researchers believe that dystonia results from an abnormality in or damage to the basal ganglia or other brain regions that control movement; there may be abnormalities in the brain's ability to process neurotransmitters which help cells in the brain communicate with each other; there many also be abnormalities in the way the brain processes information and generates commands to move; and

WHEREAS, The third most common movement disorder following tremor and Parkinson's disease, dystonia affects approximately 300,000 people in North America; this disorder does not discriminate, affecting men, women and children of all ages and backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, Dystonia may be inherited or result from other health conditions such as stroke, physical trauma, other diseases, or as a side effect of certain medications; although there is no cure for dystonia, treatments are available including oral medications, botulinum toxin injections, and several types of surgery; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious health issue, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, State and national levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim September 2025, as Dystonia Awareness 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.