Senate Resolution No. 96

BY: Senator PERSAUD

COMMEMORATING the 55th Anniversary of Guyana becoming a Republic to be celebrated February 24, 2025

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay just tribute to the cultural heritage of the ethnic groups which comprise and contribute to the richness and diversity of the community of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in keeping with its time-honored traditions, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate the 55th Anniversary of Guyana becoming a Republic to be celebrated February 24, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Guyana, officially the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, is a sovereign state on the Caribbean coast of South America; although Guyana is part of the Anglophone Caribbean, it is one of the few Caribbean countries that are part of South America; and

WHEREAS, The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), of which Guyana is a member, has its secretariat's headquarters in Guyana's capital, Georgetown; and

WHEREAS, Guyana was originally colonized by the Netherlands; later, it became a British colony, known as British Guiana, and remained so for over 200 years until it achieved independence on May 26, 1966, from the United Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, On February 23, 1970, Guyana officially became a Republic; in 2008, the country joined the Union of South American Nations as a founding member; and

WHEREAS, Guyana is a member state of the Commonwealth of Nations and has the distinction of being the only South American nation in which English is the official language; however, the majority of the population speak Guyanese Creole, an English-based Creole language with slight Dutch, Arawakan and Caribbean influences; and

WHEREAS, Historically, the region known as Guiana or Guyana comprised the large shield landmass north of the Amazon River and east of the Orinoco River known as the Land of Many Waters; and

WHEREAS, Historical Guyana consists of three Dutch colonies: Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice; modern Guyana is bordered by Suriname to the east, by Brazil to the south and southwest, by Venezuela to the west, and by the Atlantic Ocean to the north; and

WHEREAS, At 215,000 square kilometers (83,000 square miles), Guyana is the third-smallest independent state on the mainland of South America after Uruguay and Suriname; and

WHEREAS, More than 80% of Guyana is still covered by forests, ranging from dry evergreen and seasonal forests to montane and lowland evergreen rainforests; these forests are home to more than a thousand species of trees; and

WHEREAS, Guyana's tropical climate, unique geology, and relatively pristine ecosystems support extensive areas of species-rich rainforests and natural habitats with high levels of endemism; approximately 8,000 species of plants occur in Guyana, half of which are found nowhere else; and

WHEREAS, Guyana has one of the highest levels of biodiversity in the world, and with 1,168 vertebrate species and 814 bird species, boasts one of the richest mammalian fauna assemblages of any comparably sized area in the world; and

WHEREAS, The Guyana Shield region is little known and extremely rich biologically; unlike other areas of South America, over 70% of the natural habitat remains pristine; and

WHEREAS, Some notable landmarks to be found in Guyana include: Kaieteur Falls, the world's largest single-drop waterfall by volume, and St. George's Anglican Cathedral, one of the tallest wooden church structures in the world and the second tallest wooden house of worship after the Todaiji Temple in Japan; and

WHEREAS, The 55th Anniversary of Guyana becoming a Republic provides an opportunity to recognize the significance of their contributions to the quality and character of life, and, through events and activities, for all people to gain a greater appreciation of Guyanese history and traditions, and of the role Guyanese have played, and will continue to play, in our society; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to recognize such events of significance which foster ethnic pride and exemplify the cultural diversity that represents and strengthens the fabric of the people and the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 55th Anniversary of Guyana becoming a Republic to be celebrated February 24, 2025; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Guyana Consul General to New York.