Assembly Resolution No. 1136

**BY:** M. of A. Sayegh

**MEMORIALIZING** Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2026, as Arab American Heritage Month in the State of New York

**WHEREAS,** This Legislative Body is proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2026, as Arab American Heritage Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Arab American Heritage Month; and

**WHEREAS,** For more than a century, Arab Americans have been making valuable contributions to every aspect of American society in medicine, law, business, technology, civic engagement, government, and culture; and

**WHEREAS,** New York State is home to over 300,000 Arab Americans, making it the third most populated state of Arab Americans in the country; and

**WHEREAS,** New York State is home to major Arab American communities including Lebanese, Palestinian, Egyptian, Jordanian, Iraqi, Syrian, Moroccan, Yemeni, and Sudanese neighborhoods that have been woven into the fabric of New York State's history and culture; and

**WHEREAS,** Arab Americans have brought with them to America their resilient family and traditional values; they promote community-oriented hospitality, support interfaith dialogue, and peaceful coexistence; and

**WHEREAS,** Arab Americans are dedicated to education, respect for diversity, faith, and creed; they empower our state and national economies through their hard work, business development, and commitment to democracy; and

**WHEREAS,** Many Arab Americans are unable to return to their homelands, often leaving behind friends and family under the threat of war, occupation, and unrest; and

**WHEREAS,** Arabs and Arabic speaking individuals have been brought to or have immigrated to America since the 1600s and have been integral in shaping the immigrant identity of New York State; and

**WHEREAS,** The first known Arabic speaker to come to North America, Mustafa al-Zammouri, arrived as an enslaved person from Morocco in 1528, and was an important explorer of the present-day American Southwest; and

**WHEREAS,** Writer Ameen Rihani's 1911 masterpiece, "The Book of Khalid," the first Arab American novel, is an important record of Arab immigration to the community of "Little Syria" in Lower Manhattan; and

**WHEREAS,** Lebanese-American poet Khalil Gibran's masterpiece, "The Prophet," was a transformative piece of literature, with over one

hundred translations, making it one of the most translated books in history; and

**WHEREAS,** Palestinian-American academic scholar Dr. Edward Said was a fixture of New York intellectual life and the author of the landmark work "Orientalism," a postcolonial study of Western imperialism in Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East; and

**WHEREAS,** According to Census Bureau data, Arabic is one of the fastest-growing languages in the United States; and

**WHEREAS,** There is a need for public education, awareness, and policies that are culturally competent when describing, discussing, or addressing the impacts of being Arab American in all aspects of American society and Western civilization; and

**WHEREAS,** The incredible contributions and heritage of Arab Americans have helped us build a better nation; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim April 2026, as Arab American Heritage Month 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; The Arab American Association of New York in Bayridge, Brooklyn; The Arab American Institute in Washington, D.C.; and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in Washington, D.C.