Assembly Resolution No. 1162

BY: M. of A. Raga

COMMEMORATING the Asian American community's celebration of Songkran on April 13-15, 2026

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to honor, with pleasure and great pride, the Asian American community of the State of New York upon the occasion of the celebration of Songkran; and

WHEREAS, Songkran is Thailand's most famous festival; this water festival marks the beginning of the traditional Thai New Year; and

WHEREAS, The name Songkran comes from a Sanskrit word meaning 'passing' or 'approaching'; Buddha images are bathed, and younger Thais show respect to monks and elders by sprinkling water over their hands as it is believed the water of Songkran will wash the bad luck and bring good fortune for them and their families; and

WHEREAS, Songkran Festival takes place in April every year, during which time crowds of people roam around throwing buckets of water, soaking anyone in the vicinity; appreciation of family is another important aspect of the festival, with many Thai people making their way to their hometowns to spend time with older relatives; and

WHEREAS, April 13th, the first day of the new year, is known as Song Nam Phra (Pouring Water on Monks) Day; traditionally, Thais perform the Rod Nam Dum Hua ritual on the first day of Songkran, the National Elderly Day; during this ritual, young people pour fragrant water into their elders' palms as a gesture of humility and to ask for their blessings; and

WHEREAS, April 14th, known as Wan Nao, celebrates the old Thai New Year's Eve; this is also National Family Day when everyone is encouraged to spend quality time with their families; the New Year officially begins on April 15th, also known as Wan Payawan (Bathing Buddha) Day; on this day, there are parties and celebrations everywhere, with ongoing water fights, concerts, street food, and family gathering; and

WHEREAS, Songkran was originally Thailand's New Year's Day and signified the start of the Thai calendar; between 1888 and 1940, Songkran and New Year's Day in Thailand was celebrated on April 1st, but was later changed to April 13-15th, when January 1st became synchronized across the world as New Year's Day; and

WHEREAS, In addition to Thailand, Songkran is celebrated in Laos, Cambodia, Burma, the Tai ethnic minority of Vietnam, and in China's Yunnan province, as well as in Sri Lanka and other eastern Indian countries; and

WHEREAS, There are many traditional activities held during Songkran Festival, including the famous water splashing, cleaning houses and Buddha statues, merit-making in temples, as well as exciting street and

beach Songkran parties; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, during Songkran Festival Thai people go to temples and offer food and clothing to the monks; they also release birds and fish back to their natural habitats; and

WHEREAS, Folk performances and games are organized for enjoyment during Songkran; there are Thai beauty pageant competitions displaying traditional Thai dress, as well as street parades; sand is also brought to temple grounds and can be used to build sand pagodas or repair temples; helping monks with temple maintenance is regarded as good practice during Songkran Festival; and

WHEREAS, The distinguished beauty of the Asian culture and the contribution of its people in business and the economy as well as in the arts and sciences has left substantial impacts on our global community; the contributions of Asian Americans are particularly esteemed within this great Empire State and are acknowledged for their outstanding merit and value; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the significance of their contributions to the City and the State of New York, this Legislative Body is proud to honor all New Yorkers of Asian ancestry, joining with them in their celebration of Songkran; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the Asian American community's celebration of Songkran on April 13-15, 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to distinguished members of the Asian American community.