

Assembly Resolution No. 1205

BY: M. of A. DeStefano

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
September 2026 as Service Animal Appreciation Month
in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize those within our midst who have contributed to the quality of life of the citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim September 2026 as Service Animal Appreciation Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with National Service Dog Month; and

WHEREAS, September 20th is typically recognized as National Service Dog Awareness/Appreciation Day; and

WHEREAS, Service dogs are incredible working dogs who help people with disabilities live more independently; and

WHEREAS, Service dogs are trained to complete a variety of tasks such as picking up a dropped cell phone at the park or handing a credit card to the cashier at the grocery store; some service dogs can even awaken a person from a nightmare caused by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); others can alert a deaf individual when the doorbell rings; and

WHEREAS, At Canine Companions, specially bred puppies are born in the care of volunteer breeder caretakers; they learn critical social skills that help them become well-mannered puppies, and they are exposed to different surfaces, sounds, and the affection of humans; and

WHEREAS, Once the puppies turn eight weeks old, they spend the next 16 to 18 months with volunteer puppy raisers who dedicate their time to socializing and caring for them; they are exposed to a variety of different experiences and situations, and they develop necessary skills for real-life situations; and

WHEREAS, The dogs then spend six to nine months with professional instructors at one of the Canine Companions regional training centers; during this time, they learn up to 45 different tasks that help individuals with disabilities live with greater independence; some dogs change careers and become therapy dogs or emotional support dogs; and

WHEREAS, Each dog is carefully matched with a client whose needs best fit the dog's skills and temperament after which the client and dog spend two weeks at Team Training where they learn to work together, graduating as one; and

WHEREAS, As official service dogs, these incredible canines bond and help their partners lead with greater independence; Canine Companions

supports and provides follow-up services for the life of the team; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body acknowledges and honors all service dogs within the State of New York during Service Animal Appreciation Month, recognizing the invaluable importance of these companions who ensure the independence and security of individuals who are impaired or suffering from various disorders; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim September 2026 as Service Animal Appreciation 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.