

Assembly Resolution No. 1370

BY: M. of A. Peoples-Stokes

COMMEMORATING the four-year Anniversary of the shooting at Tops Friendly Markets in Buffalo, New York, on May 14, 2022, and honoring the victims, survivors, families, and community at large in wake of this devastating tragedy

WHEREAS, The very principles of American freedom, and the safety and security of every American at home and abroad were challenged by the unspeakable atrocities committed in the East Side of Buffalo during a sunny afternoon on Saturday, May 14, 2022, at a Tops grocery store located on historic Jefferson Ave; and

WHEREAS, As we mark the four-year anniversary of this senseless massacre, the Greater Buffalo community is conducting an array of events to honor those who lost their lives and to uplift the community; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, as we remember this horrific day, we honor the 10 innocent people who were killed: Roberta A. Drury, Geraldine Talley, Celestine Chaney, Katherine Massey, Pearl Young, Ruth Whitfield, Margus D. Morrison, Andre Mackneil, retired Buffalo Police Lieutenant Aaron Salter, and Heyward Patterson; and

WHEREAS, In addition, we honor the injured survivors: Jennifer Warrington, Zaire Goodman, and Christopher Braden, and many non-injured survivors throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, The May 14th Memorial Commission was established by the Governor of the State of New York and former Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown to combat racism in all forms and work towards a future where hatred and bigotry are a thing of the past; the Commission, led by Buffalo NAACP President Reverend Mark Blue, will have a leading role in uplifting the East Buffalo community; and

WHEREAS, The Commission's vision is to build the 5/14 Living Memorial and Healing Center into a lasting symbol of restoration-honoring memory, advancing healing, and shaping a national model for how communities can respond to tragedy with purpose, dignity, and hope; and

WHEREAS, The Buffalo Together Community Response Fund (BTCRF) was formed in the aftermath of the racially-motivated killing to work towards a more just and equitable community, initially as a collaboration of 14 local funding organizations, raising \$6.3 million and providing emergency response grants in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy totaling \$655,000 to 86 community-based organizations serving the East Side with the remaining \$6.1 million designated for creating a long-term community investment strategy to address systemic issues on the East Side; and

WHEREAS, For all New Yorkers, the images of this horrific domestic

act of terrorism rekindles heartbreaking memories and causes us to pause and reflect on our daily lives; and

WHEREAS, The very heart and soul of America was once more shaken to its core, and this tragedy stands as a reminder that such senseless acts of violence will not destroy the honorable values that America stands for; and

WHEREAS, The power of human compassion and the strength and spirit of the American people were revealed in Buffalo as we learned of the immediate and heroic outpouring of service and concern for the victims of this act of terrorism and in its aftermath; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body cannot express sufficient gratitude to those devoted first responders, including police officers, Erie County sheriff's deputies, and FBI agents, as well as paramedics and firefighters, who inspire us all by carrying out their sworn duties with great courage and bravery; and

WHEREAS, The combined and coordinated efforts of these individuals and their swift response are a testament to the spirit of unity and fellowship in the face of adversity which characterizes the best of America; and

WHEREAS, The people of the State of New York stand steadfast in their solidarity with Buffalo, New York, honoring all of whom were victimized by the city's worst mass shooting on Saturday, May 14, 2022, and standing resolute in our obligation to condemn racism, domestic terrorism, and all forms of hatred; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the four-year Anniversary of the mass shooting at Tops Friendly Supermarkets, and to extend to the people of Buffalo the sincerest best wishes and heartfelt prayers of all New Yorkers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to survivors and families of the victims of this horrific act of domestic terrorism.