Assembly Resolution No. 1609

BY: M. of A. Novakhov

COMMEMORATING October 18, 2026, as Azerbaijan Independence Day

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and commemorate the cultural heritage, historic contributions, and enduring traditions of the many communities that strengthen the fabric of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate October 18, 2026, as Azerbaijan Independence Day, and to honor the historic friendship between the Azerbaijani people and the Mountain Jewish community; and

WHEREAS, On October 18, 1991, the Republic of Azerbaijan restored its independence, reaffirming its sovereignty, national identity, and rich multicultural traditions following the dissolution of the Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan has long stood as a symbol of coexistence, tolerance, and mutual respect among people of different faiths and ethnic backgrounds, serving as a historic homeland and safe haven for the Mountain Jewish, or Gorsky Jewish, community for centuries; and

WHEREAS, The Mountain Jews of Azerbaijan represent one of the oldest Jewish communities in the Caucasus region, preserving their unique traditions, language, and heritage while contributing greatly to the cultural and economic life of Azerbaijan and Jewish communities throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, The village of Krasnaya Sloboda, located in Azerbaijan, is recognized internationally as one of the few entirely Jewish towns outside the State of Israel and has served for generations as a center of Mountain Jewish religious, cultural, and communal life; and

WHEREAS, Throughout periods of hardship, persecution, and instability in surrounding regions, Azerbaijan remained a place where the Mountain Jewish community was able to live openly, practice its faith freely, and preserve its identity in peace and security; and

WHEREAS, The Azerbaijani and Mountain Jewish communities share a long history of friendship, cooperation, and mutual respect, serving as an example of peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony to people around the world; and

WHEREAS, New York State is proudly home to a vibrant Mountain Jewish community, many of whom trace their roots to Azerbaijan and continue to preserve the rich customs, traditions, and values of their heritage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate October 18, 2026, as Azerbaijan Independence Day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to representatives of the Azerbaijani-American and Mountain Jewish communities throughout the State of New York.