Assembly Resolution No. 251

BY: M. of A. O'Pharrow

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 25, 2025, as Medal of Honor Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Medal of Honor Day

WHEREAS, Throughout our Nation's history, the men and women of America's Armed Forces have preserved our freedom, protected our security, and upheld our democratic values; and

WHEREAS, From the battles of the American Revolution through the crucible of two world wars to the war on terrorism today, our men and women in uniform have stood proudly in defense of the United States and in the cause of liberty; and

WHEREAS, The Medal of Honor is the highest and most prestigious military decoration in the United States; it is awarded by the President of the United States, in the name of Congress, "to members of the armed forces who have distinguished themselves conspicuously by their gallantry and intrepidity at the rick of their lives above and beyond the call of duty"; and

WHEREAS, There are three distinct versions of the Medal of Honor; the United States Navy introduced its version in 1861, which is awarded to members of the United States Navy, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard; the United States Army introduced its version in 1862, and the United States Air Force introduced its version in 1965; prior to 1965, members of the Air Force received the United States Army version of the Medal of Honor; and

WHEREAS, The Nation will forever be in debt to the recipients of the Medal of Honor for their bravery and sacrifice in times of war or armed conflict; and

WHEREAS, National Medal of Honor Day was established by the United States Congress when President George H. Bush signed Public Law 101-564 into law, to foster public appreciation and recognition of Medal of Honor recipients; it was first celebrated on March 25, 1991; and

WHEREAS, March 25th was chosen because it was on that day in 1863 that the first Medals of Honor were presented by the Secretary of War to six members of Andrews' Raiders during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, To its recipients, the Medal of Honor represents more than recognition of combat actions, it symbolizes the sacrifices of those they served alongside and those who came before; and

WHEREAS, In honor of those sacrifices, each year on National Medal of Honor Day, the recipients lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery; all four Unknown Soldiers have been presented a Medal of Honor in recognition of their sacrifice and

the sacrifice of all who serve the country; and

WHEREAS, There have been 3,545 total number of Medal of Honor Medals awarded; there are currently sixty-one living recipients; and

WHEREAS, Those serving in the Civil War represent the largest number of those who earned the Medal of Honor, and as a result, New York State is the home of 672 recipients; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, two Medals of Honor were awarded posthumously to a Marine and a Navy SEAL from the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Corporal Jason L. Dunham, United States Marine Corps. of Scio, New York, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor on January 11, 2007, for his heroic action on April 14, 2004, in Karabilah, Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Navy SEAL Lieutenant Michael P. Murphy of Patchogue, New York, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor on October 22, 2007; and

WHEREAS, The first United States Navy SEAL since the Vietnam War to be awarded the Medal of Honor, Lieutenant Murphy is the third recipient since troops were sent to Afghanistan in 2001; and

WHEREAS, Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant Gary B. Beikirch, from Rochester, New York, passed away on December 26, 2021, at the age of 74; he was presented the Medal of Honor by President Nixon on October 15, 1973, for conspicuous gallantry in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, The National Headquarters and Museum for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society is located aboard the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, On December 27, 2021, President Biden signed into law legislation establishing the Medal of Honor Monument to recognize the Medal of Honor; the monument will be located in Washington, D.C. and will complement the future National Medal of Honor Museum to be located in Arlington, Texas; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate to honor the heroic recipients of the Medal of Honor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim March 25, 2025, as Medal of Honor Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Medal of Honor Day, and to urge all citizens of the State of New York to display the Nation's flag on that date to honor all recipients of the Medal of Honor; 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; and the National Headquarters and Museum for the Congressional

Medal of Honor.