Assembly Resolution No. 522

BY: M. of A. Levenberg

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 17 - 23, 2025, as Safe Boating Week in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize official weeks that are set aside to increase awareness of issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 17 - 23, 2025, as Safe Boating Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Safe Boating Week; and

WHEREAS, National Safe Boating Week is the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Safe Boating Campaign's Annual Week of Recognition to bring attention to important life-saving tips for recreational boaters so they can have a safer, more enjoyable experience out on the water throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, For nearly 100 million Americans, boating continues to be a popular recreational activity; from coast to coast, and everywhere in between, people are taking to the water and enjoying time together boating, sailing, paddling, and fishing; and

WHEREAS, Safe boating begins with preparation and the Coast Guard estimates that human error accounts for 70 percent of all boating accidents, and that life jackets could prevent more than 85 percent of boating fatalities; and

WHEREAS, Through simple boating safety procedures such as carrying lifesaving emergency distress and communications equipment, wearing life jackets, attending safe boating courses, participating in free boat safety checks, and staying sober when navigating, New Yorkers can help ensure boaters on New York's waters stay safe throughout the season; and

WHEREAS, Many boaters have never taken a boating safety course and, while they may think they are abiding by the navigation laws, they put themselves, as well as others, in danger; and

WHEREAS, In 2022, the Coast Guard counted 4,040 accidents that involved 636 deaths, 2,222 injuries, and approximately $63 million of damaged property as a result of recreational boating accidents; the fatality rate was 5.4 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels; and

WHEREAS, Bryan Johnson was one of many victims who tragically lost his life while in a 2012 boating accident; and

WHEREAS, Following the loss of Bryan Johnson, the New York State Legislature enacted a law that mandates that anyone born after 1996 must take an eight hour boating safety course; and

WHEREAS, 76 percent of the people who die each year in boating-related accidents in the United States are fatalities caused by drowning; the vast majority of these accidents are caused by human error or poor judgment and not by the boat, equipment, or environmental factors; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that drowning was the reported cause of death in three out of every four recreational boating fatalities, and that 87% of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets; and

WHEREAS, A significant number of boaters who lose their lives by drowning each year would be alive today had they worn their life jackets; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body reaffirms its commitment to fostering continuing attention to boating safety in New York State, and encourages all New Yorkers to participate in Safe Boating Week; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 17 - 23, 2025, as Safe Boating Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Safe Boating Week; 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.