

BY: M. of A. DeStefano

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 2025, as Children's Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of serious health 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 August 2025, as Children's Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, On November 19, 2018, Caitlyn Michiels was diagnosed with anterior bilateral uveitis, a rare eye disease which is the third-leading cause of blindness in children; unfortunately, she had a difficult time finding doctors to treat her, many of whom saying they could not perform treatments on children; and

WHEREAS, Through this young girl's tireless efforts, Children's Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month (Caitlyn's Law) was passed by the Suffolk County Legislature in April of 2019; the new law directs the Suffolk County Health Department to implement updated information about eye health, and urges families through various programs to get regular checkups; and

WHEREAS, Anterior uveitis is an inflammation of the middle layer of the eye; this layer includes the iris and the adjacent tissue, known as the ciliary body; if untreated, it can cause permanent damage and loss of vision from the development of glaucoma, cataract or retinal edema; and

WHEREAS, Signs/symptoms of anterior uveitis may include blurred vision, sensitivity to light, small (or irregular-shaped) pupil, and red, sore and inflamed eye; and

WHEREAS, Since the symptoms of anterior uveitis are similar to those of other eye conditions, an optometrist will carefully examine the front and inside of the eye under a microscope, using high magnification to determine if an individual has this condition; the doctor may also perform or arrange for other diagnostic tests to help pinpoint the cause; and

WHEREAS, Treatment of this rare eye disease usually includes prescription eye drops, which dilate the pupils, in combination with anti-inflammatory drugs; treatment usually takes several days or, in some cases, several weeks; even though it usually responds well to treatment, the condition tends to recur; and

WHEREAS, Anterior uveitis can result from a trauma to the eye, and

can be associated with general health problems such as rheumatoid arthritis, syphilis, tuberculosis, sarcoid, viral (herpes simplex, herpes zoster, cytomegalovirus) or idiopathic; and

WHEREAS, Through public awareness, this Legislative Body seeks to minimize the devastating effects of anterior bilateral uveitis among all the citizens of the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 2025, as Children's Eye Health and Safety Awareness 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.