



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Hinchey, Shrestha Bill to Establish November 26th as Sojourner Truth Day Passes Senate and Assembly

OFFICE OF NYS SENATOR MICHELLE HINCHEY March 26, 2024



Bill Honoring Legacy of Ulster County-Born Abolitionist Sojourner Truth Heads to the Governor's Desk

ALBANY, NY – The State Senate and Assembly on Monday passed a bill ([S1480A/A6583](#)) sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha to designate November 26th of each year as Sojourner Truth Day in the State of New York. The bill was inspired by the efforts of the Kingston YMCA Farm Project Youth Crew in Ulster County, who initiated a grassroots campaign to honor Sojourner Truth, motivating both local and state leaders to introduce legislation establishing a day of remembrance for the

abolitionist icon.

Senator Michelle Hinchey said, “Sojourner Truth is an American hero whose courage as a fighter for justice, equality, and freedom continues to galvanize a new generation of leaders. Among these trailblazers is the Kingston YMCA Youth Crew, whose impassioned call to action sparked our bill to establish Sojourner Truth Day as an annual observance in New York. As custodians of Truth’s legacy here in Ulster County, her birthplace, we bear a profound responsibility to ensure her story is uplifted and forever remembered in state history. It was a privilege to bring the Youth Crew’s idea to life by authoring and introducing this legislation during my first year in office. Sojourner Truth Day will serve as a statewide reminder of our collective power to create a better, more equal world, and we hope the Governor will sign it into law.”

Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha said, “The story of Sojourner Truth and her historic lawsuit against white slave owners is integral to the history of Ulster County, and it didn’t make sense that while New York commemorates Truth’s peers, she herself was not officially commemorated on the calendar. Unlike a resolution, which is one-time, a commemoration is an annual remembrance day on the state calendar. The Assembly doesn’t pass many commemoration bills, but we were able to successfully make a case that this one is special. I want to thank the Speaker of the Assembly and my Assembly colleagues for their support, and to Senator Hinchey and the Kingston YMCA Farm Project for bringing this bill to life. I hope this official day of remembrance will encourage the re-telling and celebration of Truth’s story every year.”

Ulster County-born abolitionist Sojourner Truth escaped slavery in 1826 with her infant daughter and spent the remainder of her life fighting for equality. Among her many endeavors, Truth fought to abolish slavery and secure the right to vote for all women, helped

formerly enslaved Black Americans access government assistance, and advocated exhaustively to connect people to jobs. Truth made history in 1828, becoming the first Black woman to sue a white man and prevail in a U.S. court when she won a groundbreaking legal battle to secure her son's release from slavery at the Ulster County Courthouse in Kingston, New York.

Bills passed by both houses of the State Legislature can move to the Governor's desk to be signed into law or vetoed. New Yorkers can contact the Governor to express their support for making [S1480A-Hinchey/A6583-Shrestha](#), the Sojourner Truth Day bill, a law.

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