

2013-K141

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim Friday, March 8, 2013, as Harriet Tubman Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, From time to time we take note of certain individuals whom we wish to recognize for their valued contributions and to publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize Harriet Ross Tubman for her resourceful efforts in bringing countless African-American slaves out of bondage, to ensure that the rich historical legacy she established will never be forgotten, and to celebrate her life achievements throughout New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim Friday, March 8, 2013, as Harriet Tubman Day in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Ross Tubman was born on the Eastern Shore of Maryland around 1820 on a plantation in Dorchester County, and escaped from slavery in 1849; and

WHEREAS, Upon gaining her freedom, Harriet Tubman initially settled in Philadelphia where she met William Still, the Philadelphia "stationmaster" of the Underground Railroad, who, along with the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society, introduced Harriet Tubman to the inner workings of the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, In 1850, Harriet Tubman became a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad and eventually became the most influential of all the "conductors" by returning to the South 19 times through the Underground Railroad, freeing 300 slaves; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Tubman claimed that she "never ran" her "train off the track and never lost a passenger," thereby gaining the title of "Black Moses of Her People"; and

WHEREAS, In 1851, Harriet Tubman relocated members of her family to North Street in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, which became her headquarters for the Underground Railroad until 1857; and

WHEREAS, In the mid 1850s, Harriet Tubman made the acquaintance of United States Senator, Secretary of State and former New York State Governor William H. Seward and his wife, Frances, in Auburn, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Swards, in 1857, provided a home for Harriet Tubman in Auburn, which she later purchased and used as her new base of operations in the Underground Railroad; and

WHEREAS, When the Civil War began, Harriet Tubman worked as a cook in the Union Army in South Carolina and served as a nurse, a scout for raiding parties, and a spy behind Confederate lines; and

WHEREAS, After the close of the Civil War, Harriet Tubman returned to Auburn, and made it her permanent home; she joined the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and became a devoted and active member; and

WHEREAS, In 1903, Harriet Tubman transferred ownership of her property to the A.M.E. Zion Church, and after her death, the church developed and managed her home, and the adjacent property, to sustain the memory of her sacrifices for her people; and

WHEREAS, The Harriet Tubman home and property are both currently registered as National Historic Landmarks in Auburn, and the site is part of the National Parks Service Freedom Trail in honor of her life and struggles; and

WHEREAS, In March of 1913, Harriet Tubman died and was buried in Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, where she received full military honors at her funeral; and

WHEREAS, Harriet Ross Tubman is an inspiration to many people whose actions and life embodied the true essence of service, spirit and strength; because of her spirit, countless slaves were given hope and through her strength and conviction, she was compelled to risk her own freedom for the freedom of others; her dedication and commitment to the numerous slaves held in bondage have proven her to be the epitome of true leadership; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim Friday, March 8, 2013, as Harriet Tubman Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, and Dr. Adelaide L. Sanford, Vice Chancellor Ementa, New York

State Board of Regents.