

2013-K1056

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 26th celebration of Fleet Week New York, May 21-27, 2014, and commending the volunteers of Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc.

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Services who have served so faithfully and courageously in wars in which our Nation's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace during peacetime, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 26th celebration of Fleet Week New York, to be held May 21-27, 2014, and to commend the patriotic volunteers of Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Fleet Week is a United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, and United States Coast Guard tradition in which active military ships recently deployed in overseas operations dock in a variety of major cities for one week; once the ships dock, the crews can enter the city and visit its tourist attractions; and

WHEREAS, During New York City Fleet Week 2014, more than 20 vessels from the United States Navy, the United States Coast Guard (USCG), international navies and the Military Sealift Command will be dropping anchor at New York Passenger Ship Terminal on the Hudson River on the west side of the borough of Manhattan, and at the former Stapleton Homeport in the borough of Staten Island; and

WHEREAS, In this weeklong event honoring the United States' maritime heritage, three United State Navy ships will take part: the Harpers Ferry-class dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51) and the Arleigh Burke-class Aegis-equipped guided-missile destroyer USS Cole (DDG 67) from Norfolk, Virginia, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser

USS Gettysburg (CG 64) from Mayport, Florida, as well as two USCG ships: cutter Katherine Walker (WLM 552), the "Keeper of New York Harbor" from Bayonne, New Jersey, and cutter Campbell (WMEC 909) from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, sailing up the Hudson River from the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge; and

WHEREAS, Fleet Week New York 2014 will feature numerous demonstrations, including ship tours, flyovers, Marine Corps martial arts displays, parachute jump teams, equipment displays, Coast Guard drug dog exhibits; more than 10,000 sailors, Marines and members of the Coast Guard participate; and

WHEREAS, Since 1984, Fleet Week has served as a way for the residents of New York City and the tri-state area to meet members of the service and to observe the latest capabilities of today's military; New York City is the only Fleet Week event in the country that allows the ships to be open to the public, and sets aside specific times for students to visit, enabling approximately 1,500 school children to tour the ships; and

WHEREAS, Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc., a nonprofit organization established in 1990 while the Stapleton Homeport was an active United States Naval Base, has, since its inception, played a tremendous role in organizing Fleet Week Activities; an all-volunteer board and staff enable the group to fulfill its mission to provide recreation, morale and support the welfare of the visiting crewmembers to the New York City area; and

WHEREAS, Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc. immediately established the community-based "Adopt-A-Sailor" program, in which local families adopt crewmembers for the day and treat them to either a home cooked meal, or visit the sites of New York City; and

WHEREAS, Staten Islanders patriotically and wholeheartedly embrace Fleet Week each year; the borough's celebration includes the annual Splash festival, May 24 and 25, 2014, which features 10 local bands

performing at the Homeport; and

WHEREAS, Visiting sailors are encouraged to give back to the community via Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc.-organized "Community Service Projects"; abandoned cemeteries, pediatric units in local hospitals, senior citizen centers, and veterans' organizations are a few past beneficiaries of this program and, this year, the sailors will join in continuing Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts with Habitat for Humanity, volunteering with Meals on Wheels and at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen; and

WHEREAS, Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc. has also incorporated an educational component to its Fleet Week festivities; not only are school-age children allowed to experience first-hand the wonders of the ships and their crews, but seniors at all Staten Island high schools are given the opportunity to earn mandatory community service credit through their participation, as well as to gain a better understanding of service as they work alongside the men and women of our maritime forces; and

WHEREAS, The dedication and sacrifices of our military personnel ensure our continued role as a Nation that embodies the ideals of democracy, and is a defender of liberty for peoples throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Fleet Week New York 2014 provides an opportunity for all New Yorkers to express gratitude to the men and women of the United States Armed Forces for their tremendous sacrifices made for our Nation and for the benefit of all Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 26th celebration of Fleet Week New York, May 21-27, 2014, and to commend the patriotic volunteers of Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Staten Island Fleet Week, Inc.