

## 2015-J2047

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the India Cultural Society of Rockland, and extending a warm welcome to its representatives upon the occasion of their visit to Albany, New York, on May 12, 2015

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those organizations which foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the India Cultural Society of Rockland, and extend a warm welcome to its representatives upon the occasion of their visit to Albany, New York, on Tuesday, May 12, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Founded 42 years ago, India Cultural Society of Rockland (ICSR) strives to bring cultural programs to Rockland County, New York, and its surrounding areas; and

WHEREAS, ICSR holds several programs throughout the year, such as the India Day Parade, Navaratri Garba and a Diwali Dinner and Dance, as well as the Annual Program, which consists of performances by children of all ages; and

WHEREAS, The Indian American population has grown to be one of the more diverse and well-recognized communities within the United States; with a population of 2.8 million, Indian Americans are the third largest group among Asian Americans; and

WHEREAS, Indian Americans are among the wealthiest communities in the United States, with a median annual household income of \$88,000, compared with the national median of \$49,800, according to one study; in addition, more than 70% of Indian American immigrants over 18 years of age speak English very well, compared with 53% of all Asian American

immigrants; and

WHEREAS, Indian Americans have attained the highest educational levels of all ethnic groups in the United States; almost 40% of all Indians in America have a master's, doctorate, or other professional degree, which is five times the national average; and

WHEREAS, India's cultural influences have become more and more commonplace throughout the United States; many gyms teach yoga classes and popular exercise regimens such as Pilates have been influenced by ancient Indian spiritual exercises, as well as Bhangra, a North Indian folk dance; and

WHEREAS, Meditation, similarly, has become widely popular; this ancient Vedantic technique to reach inner peace has been popularized by Indian gurus who have helped spread the practice throughout the West; one transcendental meditation organization claims to have taught more than 50,000 students across the United States, Latin America and Africa during the past two years alone; and

WHEREAS, Numerous United States citizens value the concept of ahimsa, non-violence, as popularized by Mahatma Gandhi; and

WHEREAS, Worldwide, flavorful Indian spices and seasonings have increased the appeal of vegetarian food; spices are also of special interest in the alternative health community, where they are viewed as anti-inflammatory agents, that can help the aging brain and play a role in cancer prevention; and

WHEREAS, Even more wide-spread is India's music and dance scene; the sitar has been used by artists from the Beatles to Janet Jackson; the most powerful Indian cultural export, though, has long been its film industry, nicknamed Bollywood, which is generally believed to produce the largest number of feature films in the world; and

WHEREAS, There are many other aspects of Indian culture that have spread throughout the United States, ranging from curries to computer programs, self-realization to the arts, and well beyond; the popular

Indian art of using henna to create beautiful body designs and patterns only temporarily affects the surface of the skin, but the influence of India is likely to leave a permanent and positive impact on the United States; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the India Cultural Society of Rockland, and to extend a warm welcome to its representatives upon the occasion of their visit to Albany, New York, on May 12, 2015; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the India Cultural Society of Rockland.