

2015-K578

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION urging the New York State Congressional delegation to recognize industrial hemp as a valuable agricultural commodity and to pass legislation which removes barriers to state regulation of the commercial production of industrial hemp

WHEREAS, The agricultural industry is part of the foundation upon which our distinct American heritage is built; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to urge the New York State Congressional delegation to recognize industrial hemp as a valuable agricultural commodity and to pass the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015 (S134, HR525) which removes barriers to state regulation of the commercial production of industrial hemp; and

WHEREAS, June 1-7, 2015, marks the Sixth Annual celebration of Hemp History Week; and

WHEREAS, Industrial hemp refers to the non-drug oilseed and fiber varieties of the Cannabis plant which have less than three-tenths of one percent Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and are cultivated exclusively for fiber, stalk and seed; and

WHEREAS, The flowering tops of industrial hemp cannot produce any drug effect when smoked or ingested; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Legislature passed legislation in 2014 to allow pilot programs to research the growth of industrial hemp in New York State by the Department of Agriculture and institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, The bill signed by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo (A9140/S7047-2014) defines industrial hemp as an agricultural product for the purposes of research pilot programs, in accordance with the language passed in the federal farm bill (Sec. 7606 of H.R. 2642), which legitimized state industrial hemp pilot research programs; and

WHEREAS, The Controlled Substances Act of 1970 specifies the findings to which the government must attest in order to classify a substance as a Schedule I drug; these findings state that a substance must have a high potential for abuse, possess no accepted medical value, and have a lack of accepted safety for use; none of the specifications apply to industrial hemp; and

WHEREAS, Industrial hemp is a high-value, low-input crop which is not genetically modified and requires little or no pesticides; it can also be dry land farmed and uses less fertilizer than wheat and corn; and

WHEREAS, Each year, American companies are forced to import millions of dollars worth of hemp seed and fiber products annually from Canada, Europe, and China; and

WHEREAS, Nutritious hemp foods can be found in grocery stores nationwide and strong durable hemp fibers can be found in the interior parts of millions of American cars; and

WHEREAS, In addition, retail sales of hemp products nationwide in 2013 are estimated to be over \$ 581 million annually, and numerous buildings are being constructed using a hemp and lime mixture which acts to sequester carbon; and

WHEREAS, The reluctance to permit industrial hemp farming is denying agricultural producers in this country the ability to benefit from an important crop which can provide significant economic benefits to producers and manufacturers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the New York State Congressional Delegation be and hereby is respectfully memorialized by this Legislative Body to recognize industrial hemp as a valuable agricultural commodity; to pass the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015; to define industrial hemp in Federal law as non-psychoactive and genetically identifiable species of the

genus Cannabis; to acknowledge that allowing and encouraging farmers to produce industrial hemp will improve the balance of trade by promoting domestic sources of industrial hemp; and to assist United States produc-

ers by removing barriers to State regulation of the commercial
production of industrial hemp; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to each member of the Congressional Delegation from the State of New York.