Respectfully Observing Memorial Day

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Each day as Americans, we enjoy the freedom of peace, prosperity and independence. These are virtues upon which the United States was built and ideals that bind us together as a nation. On Memorial Day we pause to remember that freedom comes at great cost. Throughout history, in fields, skies, and seas around the world, American military personnel have stood tall to oppose the enemies of freedom. Many of these brave servicemen and women gave their lives to defend our liberty and uphold the promise of our democracy. The first Memorial Day was observed in 1868 in remembrance of soldiers who died in the Civil

War.

 For 136 years, our nation has set aside this day to pay homage to American patriots who have fallen in service to our country. As New Yorkers honor their spirit and courage, we remember the generations of sacrifices made by our armed forces and their families, and we continue to pray for those now serving on our behalf.

Unfortunately, the "Memorial" in Memorial Day has been ignored by too many of us who are beneficiaries of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Often we do not observe the day as it should be, a day where we actively remember our ancestors, our family members, our loved ones, our neighbors, our friends who have given the ultimate sacrifice:

- by visiting cemeteries and placing flags or flowers on the graves of our fallen heroes.

- by visiting memorials.

- by flying the Flag half-staff until noon.

- by flying the 'POW/MIA Flag' as well.

- by participating in a "National Moment of Remembrance": at 3 p.m. to pause and think upon the true meaning of the day, and for Taps to be played.

- by renewing a pledge to aid the widows, widowers, and orphans of our fallen dead, and to aid the disabled veterans.