

2015-J4930

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 46th Anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2016

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those institutions and organizations, government and community leaders dedicating their purposeful work to increasing public awareness of, and appreciation for New York's natural resources, recognizing the role all citizens have in protecting the environment and the quality of life in this Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Over the 46 years since a former United States Senator from Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, called for a nationwide environmental teach-in and founded Earth Day on April 22, 1970, millions of Americans, year after year, have conducted peaceful demonstrations calling for environmental reform; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is now observed annually on April 22nd by more than 500 million people around the globe and national governments in 175 countries; and

WHEREAS, In the more than four decades which have passed since the first Earth Day, the ongoing burdens of population growth, pollution, extreme weather and so many other environmental challenges and crises have remained high among the most critical issues confronting our State, our Nation and all nations; and

WHEREAS, As the commitment of increasing numbers of American citizens and people around the world have been raised to unprecedented levels, an emerging and ever-developing national and international consciousness in activism, advocacy, education, government and industry has spread across the globe and resulted in the passage of sweeping new laws to protect our air, our land, our water, our wildlife and all of the planet's endangered, finite and vastly overburdened resources; and

WHEREAS, Sustaining the quality and the productivity of our natural environment, through a balanced, diligent, fair and serious sense of stewardship and conservation, is the foundation of a healthy society and a robust economy best achieved through a far-reaching, diverse network of decision makers working in unison for common goals and a common good to enhance, preserve and protect the natural resources, environmental beauty and the ethics of conservation which have long defined our State; and

WHEREAS, A deep-rooted knowledge of ways to live in harmony with our environment, and the methods and technologies to accomplish this end, already exists in the countless policies and programs which New York State has enacted in defense of our pristine natural resources and to secure the well-being of communities sustained by agriculture, founded nearby clean waters and, more recently, advanced by a movement that promotes reliance on renewable energy resources and recycling; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is highlighted by the inclusion of a fully funded \$300-million Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), something many conservation advocates have been fighting for and working on for a number of years, and that they are hailing as a great victory, as they should; and WHEREAS, \$22 Million was allocated to the EPF's new Climate Mitigation and Adaption category to support New York's comprehensive climate strategies; and

WHEREAS, Some of the programs funded will be the Municipal Clean Vehicle Rebate Program, the Climate Resilient Farms Program, State Vulnerability Assessment, Smart Growth State Assistance Payments, and the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Beyond the Power System; these programs will enable the New York State government to continue to lead by example and protect New Yorkers and the environment; and

WHEREAS, Local communities can do much to reverse environmental degradation and contribute to building a healthy society by promoting energy conservation, sustainable land use policies, and public transit; and

WHEREAS, There are sound cultural, economic and environmental reasons for local governments to initiate energy efficiency and renewable energy practices; and

WHEREAS, The environmental realities of our time require citizens in every community, of every age and from all walks of life, to make a dramatic shift in our relationship to the earth; and

WHEREAS, April 22, 2016, marks the 46th Anniversary of Earth Day, a day set aside to celebrate the beauty and bounty of our environment and to renew and revitalize local, state, national and international efforts to protect and maintain respect for the environment and all resources; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day 2016 activities and events will educate all citizens on the importance of acting in an environmentally sensitive fashion by recycling, conserving energy and water, using efficient transportation, and adopting more ecologically sound lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, The overriding mission of Earth Day 2016 is not to plan only one day of events and activities, but to continue worldwide action to protect all aspects of the environment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 46th Anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all New Yorkers, in every community, will be recommitted to undertaking programs and projects enhancing our state's natural environment; and be it further

RESOLVED, That New York State hereby encourages our residents, businesses, schools and other institutions to use Earth Day to celebrate the planet and commit to building sustainable societies; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body congratulate all the concerned citizens of New York State who have embraced the responsible work of protecting and preserving the environment for future generations.