

2021-J1849

Senate Resolution No. 1849

BY: Senator PARKER

COMMEMORATING the 150th Anniversary of Arbor Day
to be celebrated on April 29, 2022

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to support and promote the historic and significant observance of Arbor Day in New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Arbor Day to be celebrated on April 29, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Arbor Day was founded by journalist, politician and tree-enthusiast Julius Sterling Morton to improve his home state of Nebraska's farming prospects and grow the agricultural landscape by planting trees and raising awareness of their many benefits; and

WHEREAS, The first Arbor Day was held on April 10, 1872, and brought together thousands of people who planted more than one million trees in pursuit of Julius Sterling Morton's goal; in addition to the reward of helping the environment, those who planted the most trees received prizes for their accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Today, every state in our Nation and more than 30 countries across the globe celebrate the holiday of Arbor Day, whether it is a

single-day event or an entire week dedicated to the planting of trees while emphasizing caring for them as a way to sustainably protect our planet's natural resources; and

WHEREAS, Trees are essential for life; they give us clean water to drink; air to breathe; shade and food to humans, animals and plants; and provide habitats for numerous species of fauna and flora, firewood for cooking and heat, materials for buildings and places of spiritual, cultural and recreational importance; and

WHEREAS, Trees also play a vital role in the infrastructure of a city; unfortunately, many of these urban settings in general do not have enough trees necessary to provide their many benefits to its residents; and

WHEREAS, Trees provide canopy and shade which helps to cool a city down; when there are not enough of them, an urban heat island is created, resulting in a dangerous rise in temperature; on average, urban heat islands are 5 to 7 degrees warmer during the day, and can increase temperatures by as much as 22 degrees at night; and

WHEREAS, A urban heat island (UHI) effect occurs when pavement absorbs and stores solar radiation, leading to a further increase in the surface temperatures; heat absorbed by the black asphalt pavements is then released into the surrounding environment leading to pavement rutting and UHI effect; and

WHEREAS, Sustained high temperatures also negatively affect health quality indicators of residents in areas lacking trees, meaning those with afflictions such as asthma, hypertension, and diabetes are more susceptible to experience poorer health in these conditions; and

WHEREAS, It is equally important to acknowledge the mental health aspect of not having enough trees; trees encourage people to go outside, be active and interact with their environment and those in it; these are important factors which can lend themselves to closeness among neighbors, increased activity among children and more positive mental health practices; and

WHEREAS, In the spirit of fostering a deeper understanding of trees and gaining first-hand experience as to their benefits, projects such as the Department of Environmental Conservation's School Seedling Program which provides free seeds and shrubs to all educational institutions in New York State are encouraged; and

WHEREAS, In addition, organizations are encouraged to apply for the Arbor Day Foundation's Environmental Equity Grant, which awards \$100,000 to entities working to combat environmental inequalities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is now moved to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Arbor Day and to acknowledge the tireless efforts of citizens and organizations which celebrate the spirit of this holiday through their acts of service and to support them as they continue to do so; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who dedicate their purposeful time and energy to generating an increased appreciation for trees, including the acts of conserving, planting and maintaining them, as well as educating and fostering a higher degree of public awareness surrounding their benefits and all the good they do in the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to

commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Arbor Day on April 29, 2022; and be
it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be
transmitted to the Arbor Day Foundation.