

## 2023-K2246

Assembly Resolution No. 2246

BY: M. of A. Rules (Shimsky)

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim the month of May 2024, as Williams Syndrome Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of serious health issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim the month of May 2024, as Williams Syndrome Awareness Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Williams Syndrome (WS) is a genetic condition present at birth that can affect anyone and is characterized by medical issues, including cardiovascular disease, developmental delays, and learning disabilities; these medical conditions often occur side by side with striking verbal abilities, highly social personalities and an affinity for music; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that Williams Syndrome impacts one in every 10,000 people worldwide, including as many as 30,000 in the United States; it is known to occur equally in both males and females and in every culture; and

WHEREAS, As children with Williams Syndrome grow, many struggle with

things like spatial relations, numbers, and abstract reasoning, which can make daily tasks a challenge; and

WHEREAS, In adulthood, individuals with Williams Syndrome will often need supportive housing and other resources to reach their fullest potential; with these supports, they can contribute greatly to their communities as volunteers or paid employees in a wide variety of fields; and

WHEREAS, Twelve years ago, Camille Fortunato, as a parent of a child with Williams Syndrome, began a quest for appropriate educational and therapeutic services for her son, Anthony; and

WHEREAS, Her son Anthony was very ill when he was born, but doctors were initially unable to determine what the underlying issue was; she and her husband Stefano Filippazzo took Anthony to see cardiologists, pulmonologists and critical care physicians; it took years of excruciating searching to finally find the diagnosis for this rare disease; and

WHEREAS, Upon receiving Anthony's diagnosis, his parents embarked upon a commendable pursuit to raise awareness and capital for the Williams Syndrome Association (WSA); over the years, they have participated in a variety of very successful fundraising events; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1982, the Williams Syndrome Association provides support to individuals with Williams Syndrome, as well as their

families, connecting them with professionals and others who can assist them in coping with the condition; and

WHEREAS, Through this organization's efforts, from raising public

awareness, to funding critical new research, and providing valuable information and support to families, the Williams Syndrome Association has improved the quality of life and futures of those affected by Williams Syndrome; and

WHEREAS, The Williams Syndrome Association, along with the families and friends of those with Williams Syndrome, are to be commended for their hard work, compassion, and dedication to educating the state about this rare disorder; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim the month of May 2024, as Williams Syndrome Awareness Month in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York.