

## 2013-J3718

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim March 16-22, 2014, as Sunshine Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with March 16, 2014, as Freedom of Information Day

WHEREAS, The pillars of democracy include government transparency, accessibility and accountability, resulting in an informed citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Sunshine Week is a national initiative about the importance of open government and freedom of information; it seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in their government at all levels; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body understands and appreciates the value of access to information it needs to make informed decisions, and the corresponding importance of access to government information by the citizens of this state; and

WHEREAS, The free flow of information from the government to the people instills trust and confidence in our democracy, and ensures that our government is accessible, accountable and open; and

WHEREAS, We must continue to educate and empower the public regarding their right to access government documents, information and meetings; and

WHEREAS, Freedom of Information Day is an event held annually on or near March 16, the birthday of James Madison, the fourth President of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Hailed as the Father of the Constitution, James Madison was instrumental in the drafting of the United States Constitution and as the key champion and author of the United States Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, Freedom of information is an extension of freedom of speech, as well as individual rights, each of which were very important to James

Madison; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, the protection of freedom of speech as a right includes not only the content, but also the means of expression; as with the right to freedom of expression, the right to privacy is a recognized human right and freedom of information acts as an extension to this right; and

WHEREAS, Nationwide, during the week of March 16-22, 2014, countless citizens and other individuals interested in open government will celebrate Sunshine Week and Freedom of Information Day; and

WHEREAS, Established to educate the public on the importance of open government, Sunshine Week and Freedom of Information Day continue to be instrumental in the preservation of our Nation's core fundamental human rights; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim March 16-22, 2014, as Sunshine Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with March 16, 2014, as Freedom of Information Day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.