

## 2023-J120

Senate Resolution No. 120

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim July 3, 2023, as Plastic Bag Free Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to increase awareness of serious environmental issues that affect the lives of citizens of 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 memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim July 3, 2023, as Plastic Bag Free Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of International Plastic Bag Free Day; and

WHEREAS, Created by Bag Free World, International Plastic Bag Free Day was created as a worldwide initiative for the purpose of getting rid of the single-use of plastic bags around the world by promoting environmental conservation and encouraging us all to stay away from the use of plastic bags and instead, look for more eco-friendly alternatives; and

WHEREAS, Plastic pollution is a global catastrophe; plastic bags are used by almost every retailer we visit, accounting for approximately 500 billion plastic bags which are thrown out, causing detrimental effect on

the environment, wildlife and indeed human health; plastic bags remain in the world for anywhere from 100-500 years before finally decaying completely; and

WHEREAS, The marine ecosystem in particular is suffering immensely as a result of plastic pollution; 31 species of marine mammals are known to have ingested marine plastic whilst over 100 species of sea birds have ingested plastic artefacts, and over 250 species have become entangled in plastic, whilst entanglement rates of approximately eight percent have been discovered in some sea lion and seal species; and

WHEREAS, This pollution is also extremely dangerous because it is leading to the transportation of invasive species, which can have a catastrophic influence on biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, Humans are not immune from the impact either; plastic particles in the ocean attract toxins, which in turn affects us, as the toxins enter the food chain; and

WHEREAS, International Plastic Bag Free Day is dedicated to heightening awareness about these and very real and pressing issues brought about by this most popular of disposable carrying devices; we are reminded that those bags we pick up from the retailers are used for an incredibly short time, usually under 25 minutes, and are then disposed of; and

WHEREAS, Out in the great reaches of the ocean are massive reefs made up of all sorts of plastic waste, and plastic bags play heavily

among them; International Plastic Bag Free Day gives us an opportunity to remind ourselves, and others, that every action we take, and every bag we dispose of, effects the lives of everyone in the world for

generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Everyday millions of plastic bags get disposed of, and without intervention, the future is going to be dealing with hundreds of millions of pounds of plastic bags clogging oceans, rivers, and the world at large; the problem has reached such proportions that what was once clean sand on the beaches of the world are now being found to be made of composites of natural substances and garbage plastic; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious environmental issue, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, state, national and international levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim July 3, 2023, as Plastic Bag Free Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York and Bag Free World.