

## 2023-J149

Senate Resolution No. 149

BY: Senator PARKER

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 1, 2023, as Ellis Island 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 moments in history which affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 1, 2023, as Ellis Island Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Ellis Island Day; and

WHEREAS, Ellis Island Day is observed annually on January 1st to celebrate an island which served as a gateway to America during the immigration wave of 1892 through 1954, when an average of 1,900 people passed through the station daily; and

WHEREAS, During this time, approximately 17 million people immigrated to America through the immigration station at Ellis Island; and

WHEREAS, Long before it became the site of the immigration processing stations, Ellis Island was a public execution site for pirates during the 1760s; years later, the island was sold to a colonial

New York merchant, Samuel Ellis, who tried to resell it but was unsuccessful; and

WHEREAS, In 1808, the United States government fully acquired the island for the sum of \$10,000, and Ellis Island was converted into a military fort to protect the New York Harbor from possible British and French armed attacks; and

WHEREAS, The military upgraded the island to include a 14-gun battery, mortar battery, magazine, and barracks; after its fortification, Ellis Island was renamed Crown Fort but was later changed to Fort Gibson after the War of 1812; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of the war, Fort Gibson changed hands and went through various states of disuse; by 1881, almost all its firepower was removed, and its administration passed to the Navy's Bureau of Ordnance; and

WHEREAS, In 1890, the United States government ordered the remaining firepower to be removed and the island converted to a federal immigration station, with its administration handed over to the Department of the Treasury; and

WHEREAS, The immigration station began receiving immigrants on January 1, 1892, and by June 15, 1897, before its wooden structures were razed in a fire accident, it had processed about 1.5 million immigrants; and

WHEREAS, After its reconstruction and expansion, the immigration station was again opened on December 17, 1900, but closed for the final time on November 12, 1954; and

WHEREAS, In 1965, Ellis Island was added to the Statue of Liberty National Monument and President Lyndon B. Johnson approved its redevelopment; in 1990, the island's main building, a museum, was opened to the public; the American Family Immigration History followed in 2001, and the ferry building in 2007; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater awareness of the history of our State and Nation, and more must be done to increase awareness at the local, State and National levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 1, 2023, as Ellis Island Day 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.