



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0806-2019, **Version:** *

Res. No. 806

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation declaring May 18 as Haitian Flag Day in the state of New York, and Congress to pass and the President to sign legislation declaring May 18 as Haitian Flag Day in the United States.

By Council Member Eugene

Whereas, The flag of Haiti was adopted on May 18, 1803, after Haitian Revolution leader and founding father of Haiti, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, tore the White section out of the French flag and had his goddaughter, Catherine Flon, sew together the Red and Blue sections, creating the first flag of the Republic of Haiti; and

Whereas, Haiti is the first and only nation to not only successfully lead a rebellion of enslaved people against their enslavers, but also to be founded by formerly enslaved people, after having declared independence from France in 1804; and

Whereas, The Haitian Flag is said to represent the unity of the Nation's people of color and a rejection of its colonizers; and

Whereas, Citizens of Haiti and people of Haitian descent all across the world celebrate Haitian Flag Day on May 18th to recognize Haiti's strength, resilience, and rich cultural heritage, by gathering with friends and family, preparing and dining on Haitian cuisine, and participating in parades, festivals, and concerts; and

Whereas, The United States has the largest Haitian Diaspora in the world, serving as home to approximately 915,000 first and second-generation Haitian-Americans; and

Whereas, Hundreds of thousands of Haitian-Americans reside, worship, and engage in commerce and recreation in New York; and

Whereas, New York has the second largest Haitian Diaspora in the United States and the second major

population center, with 130,000 immigrants in the state and approximately 160,000 Haitian-Americans concentrated in the New York metropolitan area (New York City-Long Island-Northern New Jersey), according to a 2014 report from the Migration Policy Institute; and

Whereas, As the anti-immigrant climate in the United States further threatens Haitian-Americans- including President Trump's alleged derogatory remarks towards Haiti, among other Caribbean, African and Latin American countries, and his administration's attempt to end Temporary Protected Status for approximately 58,000 Haitians, many of whom found refuge in New York after Haiti's catastrophic earthquake in 2010-it is now important to show solidarity with our Haitian-American public, while celebrating its traditions and values; and

Whereas, Designating May 18 as Haitian Flag Day in New York State and in the United States would further conserve Haitian heritage, formalize and foster relationships among residents, businesses, nonprofits, and community groups, as well as enable the showcasing, preservation, harnessing, and celebration of religious, academic, civic, cultural, health, and commercial Haitian institutions; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation declaring May 18 as Haitian Flag Day in the state of New York, and Congress to pass and the President to sign legislation declaring May 18 as Haitian Flag Day in the United States.

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