BCLEG MAY20'13 PM 1:30

A PROCLAMATION TO BE SUBMITTED
BY LEGISLATOR MARINELLI

RE: Supporting the Recently Announced Boost of State Investment in the I Love NY Marketing Campaign

WHEREAS, Western New York was the host region for the Empire State Tourism Conference that took place in Niagara Falls from May 1 – 3, 2013; and

WHEREAS, representatives of Empire State Development and the I Love NY Tourism Office heard speaker after speaker appeal for more state investment in marketing New York State as an international and domestic tourism destination for individual, family, convention and group travel; and

WHEREAS, for the last decade, the under-resourcing of the state's tourism campaign has been a source of concern to the private businesses and non-profit organizations that depend on tourism; and

WHEREAS, during the recent recession, tourism businesses cut back on their marketing and advertising budgets, and our state's virtual absence from the competitive tourism marketing industry was the outcome of New York State withdrawing advertising and dollars from many markets due do its budget crisis; and

WHEREAS, convention and group travel are booked years in advance, and the loss of exposure of the I Love NY brand damaged the business development efforts of destination marketing organizations and the suppliers of tourism product alike for many years; and

WHEREAS, at its session of April 25, 2013, this Honorable Body unanimously sponsored and approved Intro 8-6 (2013) which "called upon the Governor and State Legislature to restore funding reductions and to make an even greater investment in the tourism industry in New York State to increase the well-established return on investment of tourism development, marketing and promotion dollars; and

WHEREAS, in conjunction with the May 8 New York State Tourism Summit held in Albany, Governor Cuomo announced a tripling of the I Love NY marketing budget, from $19 million in the last fiscal year to $60 for this year; and

WHEREAS, this new investment represents the highest level of tourism funding in decades, making New York State third in the country in tourism spending; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's announcement was met with overwhelming support by the businesses in tourism and hospitality that are eager to host many more visitors in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, tourism is the fifth largest employment sector in New York State and generated more than $29 billion in wages alone from nearly $57 billion in direct tourism spending that supports jobs in the Empire State; and

WHEREAS, an exciting element of the Governor's plan is to tap into advertising opportunities with the Port Authority and the MTA (Metropolitan Transit Authority) and use them as marketing tools to encourage tourist visitation in Upstate New York; and

WHEREAS, tapping into the metro New York City area in such a planned, strategic way bodes well for the long overdue conversion of New York City into a vast feeder market for tourist visitation in Upstate New York;

WHEREAS, this heightened exposure of the tourism offerings in Upstate New York is an opportunity to reach millions of persons from dozens of nationalities in NYC, magnifying the value of the I Love NY marketing campaign both here and abroad.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this Honorable Body go on record in support of New York State's increased investment in the I Love New York marketing campaign and other avenues for boosting tourist visitation and spending, especially in Upstate New York and Erie County; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be conveyed to Governor Andrew Cuomo, the Western New York Delegation to the State Legislature, County Executive Mark Poloncarz, the Visit Buffalo Niagara Board, and all others deemed necessary and proper.

FISCAL IMPACT: None for resolution.