

A PROCLAMATION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATOR BURKE

STATE OF NEW YORK
LEGISLATURE OF ERIE COUNTY
BUFFALO, N.Y., AUGUST 24, 2014, A.D.

23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF UKRAINE

WHEREAS, twenty-three years ago on August 24th, the Parliament of Ukraine acceded to the will of the Ukrainian people by formally declaring an independent Ukrainian state, thereby taking the first step toward establishing a free and democratic state; and ending the brutal totalitarian regime whose crimes against humanity cost the lives of millions of Ukrainians; and

WHEREAS, after centuries of foreign domination, under both the Russian Empire and then the Soviet totalitarian regime, today unfortunately, Ukrainians continue to struggle against Russian-sponsored attempts to eradicate their nation of close to 50 million; and

WHEREAS, the massive pro-democracy rallies that began in November of 2013 as a result of the former tyrannical government's abrupt refusal to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, morphed into a demand for human rights and respect – becoming known worldwide as the Revolution of Dignity. For months the citizens of Ukraine stood at the front-lines of defense not only for their own freedom, but for the freedom of the entire trans-Atlantic alliance. While the world looked on, they courageously withstood bloody assaults, murders, tortures and executions. Still, they continued to stand together and demand the rule of law and the right to live with dignity in a civil society; and

WHEREAS, under direct threat from Russia's unrelenting aggressive behavior vis-à-vis Ukraine, including Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and Russian-supported terrorists in the Donbas, the brave people of Ukraine, in their struggle to maintain the internationally recognized territorial integrity of Ukraine as sovereign and inviolable, pulled off a democratic triumph by freely electing their president and proving to the world that they are committed to democracy, sovereignty and national unity; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of Ukrainians around the world to preserve their language, culture and history must be acknowledged and encouraged, so that this effort continues for the sake of future generations. Such preservation has allowed Ukrainians to make significant contributions to the culture and society of the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, the Erie County Legislature on behalf of its citizens, do hereby proclaim August 24, 2014, as "Twenty-Third Anniversary of Ukrainian Independence Day" and urge all citizens to join in commemorating this momentous event in the history of the Ukrainian nation. On this day, let us recommit ourselves to helping the Ukrainian nation reclaim its rightful place in the international democratic community and remember the Heavenly Hundred, and hundreds of other heroes, who sacrificed their lives to ensure freedom and happiness of the future generations.