

A Proclamation submitted by Legislator Barbara Miller-Williams

WHEREAS, Śmingus Dyngus, also known as Dyngus Day and ‘Wet Monday’, is an annual post-Lenten Polish festival that celebrates the end of the often restrictive observance of Lent, which over the decades, has become a wonderful holiday to celebrate Polish-American culture, heritage and traditions; and

WHEREAS, Dyngus Day highlights Polish customs that date back to pre-Christian, Slavic practices and has been associated with the baptism of Prince Mieszko I, who, along with his court, was baptized on Easter Monday into Christianity, bringing Catholicism to Poland. Dyngus Day customs, such as the throwing of water and the complimentary practice of switching with pussy willow branches, are ancient spring rituals that symbolize cleansing, purification, and fertility; and

WHEREAS, Dyngus Day has continuously been celebrated in Buffalo for the past 9 years, the celebration has recently gained the unique distinction as “Dyngus Day Capital of the World”, hosting the largest concentration of festival locations and Polish traditions in the nation, attracting tens of thousands to Buffalo from all over the United States to celebrate spring, show Polish pride, flirt with pussy willows and listen to the best polka bands; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the late Russ Pawlak, Eddy Dobosiewicz and Marty Viniarz formed a committee that went on to organize the first Dyngus Day celebration and parade, this group decided that the Polish Community in Buffalo should have a way to celebrate their Polish heritage tradition, acknowledge who they were, where they came from, and where they wanted to go. As curators for the Central Terminal at that time, they also had the desire to use this platform to highlight the unique history of the legendary former railroad station; and

WHEREAS, Dyngus Day Buffalo has become a demonstration of civic and ethnic pride and will be celebrate the 11th Anniversary on April 17, 2017 in Buffalo’s Historic Polonia District, the Dyngus Day celebration has remained as a premier annual event in the Polish Community with many likening the event to the Polish St. Patrick’s Day.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE

RESOLVED, Erie County Legislature goes on record to recognize the hard work and dedication of the organizers of the 11th Annual Dyngus Day Parade and Celebration and to proclaim April 17, 2017 as “Dyngus Day” in Erie County.