



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0074-2024, **Version:** *

Res. No. 74

Resolution recognizing April 17 annually as Giovanni da Verrazzano Day in the City of New York.

By Council Members Carr, Brannan, Holden, Hanks, Farías, Rivera, Gennaro, Narcisse, Ariola, Paladino, Marmorato and Borelli

Whereas, Giovanni da Verrazzano (1485-1528) was an Italian explorer, born into Florentine nobility, who set out on a voyage in 1524 on behalf of French King François 1^{er} to discover a westward passage to Asia; and

Whereas, Verrazzano left France with four ships, but two were sunk by a storm early in the voyage and another was so damaged that it had to return to France, leaving Verrazzano and a crew of 150 on the remaining *Delfina*; and

Whereas, Verrazzano reached what is now Cape Fear in North Carolina in March, 1524, and sailed north, exploring the eastern coast of North America; and

Whereas, During this voyage, Verrazzano became the first European to sail into New York Harbor and into the mouth of the Hudson River on April 17, 1524, before continuing northward past the coast of what is now Rhode Island and Maine and on to Newfoundland; and

Whereas, Verrazzano's voyage contributed to mapmakers' knowledge, at the time, of the geography of the North American coast; and

Whereas, Centuries later, New York City (NYC) Mayor Robert Wagner proclaimed April 17 as Verrazzano Day, after efforts by the Italian Historical Society of America and other historians to bestow on Verrazzano the credit that they felt he was due; and

Whereas, Mayor Wagner’s proclamation was followed in 1957 by a proclamation from New York State (NYS) Governor W. Averell Harriman and by proclamations from the governors of South Carolina, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Maine, identifying Verrazzano as the first European explorer to reach their states; and

Whereas, Spanning the very New York Bay waters explored by Verrazzano, the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, which opened in 1964, was named after the Italian explorer, after overcoming some opposition; and

Whereas, In 2018, NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo signed a bill that added the second “z” to the official name of the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, which had been spelled incorrectly since the bridge’s dedication as “Verrazano,” due to an error in the construction contract; and

Whereas, Governor Cuomo said, “The Verrazzano Bridge is a vital transportation artery for millions of Staten Island and Brooklyn residents, [and we] are correcting this decades-old misspelling out of respect to the legacy of the explorer and to New York’s heritage”; and

Whereas, April 17, 2024, will be the 500th anniversary of Verrazzano’s sailing into New York Harbor; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York recognizes April 17 annually as Giovanni da Verrazzano Day in the City of New York.

Session 13
LS #14722
01/23/2024

Session 12
LS #14722
10/25/2023
RHP