



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0825-2007, **Version:** *

Res. No. 825

Resolution commemorating the 350th Anniversary of the Flushing Remonstrance in the City of New York.

By Council Members Sears, Avella, Comrie, Liu, Seabrook, Vallone Jr., Weprin and Gennaro

Whereas, The Flushing Remonstrance was the first declaration of religious freedom in the United States and is considered by many to be the antecedent to the free exercise of religion clause in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights; and

Whereas, The Flushing Remonstrance was signed by 31 men who resided in what is now the Borough of Queens on December 27, 1657, decrying an order made by Peter Stuyvesant, Governor of the New Netherlands, banning the practice of all religions except that of the Dutch Reformed Church; and

Whereas, The Flushing Remonstrance demanded that Peter Stuyvesant allow the free exercise of religion and asserted that the signers in good faith could not obey the order against harboring or transporting Quakers; and

Whereas, Four of the signers of the Flushing Remonstrance were imprisoned for their actions and two men, Edward Hart and Tobias Feake, were imprisoned by Governor Peter Stuyvesant for over a month; and

Whereas, John Bowne, an English settler, allowed Quakers to meet in his home after Governor Peter Stuyvesant's ban on the practice of the religion, and was later punished by being banished to Holland; and

Whereas, The Flushing Remonstrance eventually led to a climate of religious understanding in the City of New York, a tolerance that is still present in this religiously diverse city; and

Whereas, The Flushing Remonstrance, its signers and the Quakers in the New Netherlands were early advocates for religious freedom, and the Quaker Meeting House in Flushing, Queens serves as a physical

reminder of that great history; and

Whereas The Queens Borough President's Office and the Browne House Historical Society have launched a campaign to find the descendants of the original signers of the Flushing Remonstrance, and will commemorate the 350th anniversary of the signing on December 27, 2007; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of the New York commemorates the 350th Anniversary of the Flushing Remonstrance.

SO
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