



## Legislation Text

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### Preconsidered Res. No. 629

Resolution celebrating the New York Liberty's winning of the 2024 Women's National Basketball Association championship and declaring October 20 as New York Liberty Day annually in the City of New York.

By Council Members Hudson, Cabán, Ossé, Louis, Mealy and Restler

Whereas, The New York Liberty won its first Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) championship on October 20, 2024, at Brooklyn's Barclays Center by a score of 67-62 in overtime over the Minnesota Lynx, the only team to have beaten the Liberty multiple times in regular season play, taking three of four games; and

Whereas, In front of a sellout crowd of over 18,000, the Liberty won the title in five games, after five previous unsuccessful trips to the WNBA finals; and

Whereas, The Lynx had won four WNBA titles out of six previous trips to the finals; and

Whereas, Liberty center Jonquel Jones was named the MVP (most valuable player), averaging 17.8 points and 7.6 rebounds per game during the finals series; and

Whereas, High scorers in game 5 for the Liberty were Jones, who scored 17 points, followed by Breanna Stewart and Nyara Sabally, who each scored 13 points; and

Whereas, Stewart sent game 5 into overtime by making two free throws to tie it up with five seconds left in the fourth quarter; and

Whereas, Liberty players Sabrina Ionescu in the fourth quarter and rookie Leonie Fiebich in overtime both had critical three-pointers on the way to their game 5 win; and

Whereas, Ionescu notably also made a three-pointer that won game 3 of the championship series for the Liberty with one second left on the clock, putting the Liberty ahead two games to one in the series; and

Whereas, Reporting on game 5, ESPN noted that Sabally “turned the game on its head” when she was put in, providing “energy a stat sheet can’t record” and noted that the “other spark plug came in the form of Kayla Thornton, a tough, imposing figure,” who “took it upon herself to curb Minnesota superstar Napheesa Collier with her close checking and elite footwork”; and

Whereas, The championship five-game series was hotly contested, with three of the first four games being decided by three points or fewer; and

Whereas, The valiant contributions of Betnijah Laney-Hamilton, an important member of the squad since 2021 and coming off a July knee surgery, which has limited her playing time, were crucial to the Liberty’s win in game 2; and

Whereas, This year, the Liberty tied its own record of 32 wins during the regular season; and

Whereas, The Liberty’s defeat of the Las Vegas Aces in the semi-finals this year was especially rewarding after the Liberty’s loss to the Aces for the championship last year; and

Whereas, Liberty coach Australian Sandy Brondello, who previously coached the Phoenix Mercury to a WNBA championship in 2014, commented, “I’m really proud of our team, how resilient we were, how we stuck together, how we continued to trust each other”; and

Whereas, Many Liberty players have received accolades prior to this championship, including Paris Olympics gold medalists Stewart and Ionescu, Paris Olympian Sabally (playing for Germany), and five-time All Star and WNBA champion Courtney Vandersloot; and

Whereas, The committed teamwork and perseverance of the entire squad of Liberty players has been on display throughout the 2024 regular season as well as in post-season play right through game 5 of the finals; and

Whereas, The Liberty, which was one of the WNBA’s original franchises and moved to Brooklyn in 2020, has brilliantly reignited the ardor of New York City (NYC) fans of women’s basketball, thanks to Liberty players’ talent, skill, passion, and dedication and thanks to their mascot Ellie the Elephant, who has a fervent

following of her own; and

Whereas, The Liberty's WNBA win brings NYC its first professional basketball championship since the New York Nets won the American Basketball Association title in 1976; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York celebrates the New York Liberty's winning of the 2024 Women's National Basketball Association Championship and declares October 20 as New York Liberty Day annually in the City of New York.

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