File #: Res 0458-2026, **Version:** A

Res. No. 458-A

Resolution calling on the Governor to sign S.6487C/A.7033D to empower the New York State Council on the Arts to designate Little Yemen as a cultural district

By Council Member Members Aldebol, Hanif, Santosuosso, Cabán, Louis, Restler, Avilés, Farías, Encarnación, Stevens, Riley, Epstein, J. Sanchez, Maloney, Schulman and Narcisse

Whereas, The area known as Little Yemen in the Bronx reflects the Yemeni community's heritage and traditions and is filled with Yemeni-owned businesses, including restaurants, food stores, and clothing shops, as well as mosques and cultural centers that promote community activity; and

Whereas, The Yemeni community in the Bronx has demonstrated its solidarity and resilience in the past, such as during the successful Bodega Strike of 2017, which successfully brought together hundreds of Yemeni owners of bodegas and grocery stores to protest President Donald Trump's executive order temporarily barring citizens from seven majority-Muslim nations, including Yemen, from entering the United States; and

Whereas, Designating Little Yemen as a cultural district would recognize the community's unique cultural identity, foster pride in its contributions among its residents, and honor the diversity it brings to the Bronx and to New York City (NYC) as a whole; and

Whereas, Designating Little Yemen as a cultural district would also promote tourism and business development, which would have a positive effect on the local economy both in Little Yemen and in the Bronx generally; and

Whereas, Designating Little Yemen as a cultural district would also help preserve its distinctive

character and cultural traditions, which might otherwise be lost to gentrification and urban development; and

Whereas, If successful, Little Yemen could serve as a model for other cultural districts in NYC, just as East Harlem, also known as "El Barrio," and the Harlem Renaissance Cultural District, which have already been designated as cultural districts, do now; and

Whereas, S.6487C was introduced by New York State Senator Nathalia Fernandez on March 14, 2025, and passed by the New York State Senate on April 1, 2026; and

Whereas, Companion bill A.7033D was introduced on March 18, 2025, by New York State Assembly Member John Zaccaro, Jr., and passed by the New York State Assembly on March 5, 2026; and

Whereas, S.6487C/A.7033D would authorize the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to designate Little Yemen as a cultural district, thus making cultural institutions within the district eligible for grants, technical assistance, or other assistance deemed appropriate by NYSCA; and

Whereas, S.6487C and A.7033D would set the boundaries of Little Yemen as White Plains Road on the west, Bronxdale Avenue on the east and north, and Van Nest Avenue on the south; and

Whereas, The designation of Little Yemen as a cultural district would showcase for all NYC residents and neighborhoods the value of preserving the cultural heritage and diversity of NYC's neighborhoods and of increasing engagement of NYC residents in their communities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the Governor to sign S.6487C/A.7033D to empower the New York State Council on the Arts to designate Little Yemen as a cultural district.

LS #22536
9/29/26
RHP