



# State of New York

## Executive Chamber

### Proclamation

**Whereas**, the malicious act of setting fire to buildings and property, known as arson, is one of the Nation's most devastating crimes in terms of financial and personal loss, and it is also one of the largest, deadliest, and most expensive fire problems in the Empire State; and

**Whereas**, from an economic standpoint, these intentionally set fires cause more than \$8.3 billion in property damage, and citizens are impacted by the results of increased insurance premiums and a diminished local government tax base; and

**Whereas**, this year's observance of Arson Awareness Week focuses on the specific problem of toylike or novelty lighters – deadly and dangerous weapons when they fall into the hands of children – as these devices have been responsible for injuries, deaths, accidents, and property damage across this State and Nation; and

**Whereas**, children are attracted to novelty lighters because they look like toys, with visual effects, flashing lights, musical sounds, and toylike designs; and

**Whereas**, statistics based on fire reports submitted to the Department of State's Office of Fire Prevention and Control over the past five years indicate that in more than 25% of all fire incidents involving juveniles, a lighter was found to have been used as the source of ignition; and

**Whereas**, removing novelty lighters from the hands of children can help decrease the threat of arson from our communities as this remains a priority of New York State fire and law enforcement agencies, the insurance industry and other organizations, and we applaud all who work toward the goal of eliminating arson by increasing public awareness of this problem, conducting community-based fire safety and education classes, sponsoring training programs for fire safety personnel who specialize in the area of arson, and by sharing their expertise in conducting investigations of arson crimes; and

**Whereas**, New York supports local, state and national efforts to curtail the incidence of arson and joins in this observance and important fire prevention campaign, honoring those who work in fire prevention or fire and law enforcement investigation agencies, either in a volunteer or career capacity, to mitigate the incidence of intentionally-set fires and we thank them for their daily efforts to protect and preserve our families and communities;

**Now, Therefore**, I, David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim May 4-10, 2008 as

## ARSON AWARENESS WEEK

in the Empire State.



**G i v e n** under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this second day of May in the year two thousand eight.

*David A. Paterson*  
Governor

*[Signature]*  
Secretary to the Governor