



## Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring The Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations (CONCILIO).

The Council of the City of Philadelphia is pleased and proud to recognize and honor the Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations (Concilio) on the Occasion of its 53rd Anniversary of Service and Leadership within Philadelphia's Puerto Rican and Latino Community.

WHEREAS, The Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations, Inc., known as "Concilio," is the oldest Latino organization in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and remains dedicated to serving the economic, social, and political needs of the Latino Community; and

WHEREAS, Concilio was founded in 1962 by Puerto Rican community leaders concerned with the economic, social and political issues facing the growing Puerto Rican and Latino community of the City of Philadelphia. Beginning as a federation of social and fraternal organizations, Concilio grew in numbers over the years and evolved into a pillar of the Latino community; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, Concilio is first and foremost a human service organization that provides a network of family support services to vulnerable families in Eastern North and Northeast Philadelphia, serving more than 9,000 individuals each year through its comprehensive network. Concilio has always been guided by a mission to ensure that equitable social, educational, health, and cultural services are available to everyone. Concilio has had a leading role in many significant social justice issues that impact the Latino community, from immigration reform to voting rights, and was an instrumental partner during the 2010 census, working to ensure that the census would accurately reflect the growth and economic impact of Philadelphia's successful and evolving Puerto Rican and Latino community; and

WHEREAS, Concilio is widely known and appreciated for its founding of two historic Philadelphia events that convene the entire Puerto Rican and Latino community every year. Concilio founded the Puerto Rican Festival in 1964 (*Festival Puertorriqueno de Filadelfia*), and the Hispanic Fiesta at Penn's Landing in 1981 which draws 30,000 people annually to Penn's Landing for a two day celebration of the Puerto Rican and Latino culture and heritage. These events include traditional art, music, dance, food, and games, and provide a unique opportunity for the Latino Community to honor and enjoy its rich and diverse culture. Concilio is also the host of countless other community events, forums, and service fairs which aim to serve the Latino community, including the Seniors Luncheon which recognizes 350 seniors as the pillars of the Puerto Rican community and demonstrates our appreciation for their contributions to our community; and

WHEREAS, The festivities of Puerto Rican Festival Week are kicked off each year by the raising of the Puerto Rican flag on the North side of City Hall in Dilworth Plaza. The annual Awards Gala ceremony has become one of the most anticipated social events among Puerto Ricans in the region, and gathers together the area's Puerto Rican leaders, government figures, corporate executives, media personalities and heads of community-based organizations. The Festival Week culminates with the Puerto Rican Day Parade (*Parada Puertorriqueña*). Philadelphia's Puerto Rican Day Parade is the "Crown Jewel" of the Puerto Rican Festival, creating an opportunity for the Puerto Rican community to come together in cultural celebration with the entire City of

Philadelphia. This colorful and dynamic festival promotes unity, economic development and education, while preserving and promoting the culture and heritage of the Puerto Rican people; and

WHEREAS, Concilio also is a leader in the community in providing services that support families in need and help them towards self-sufficiency. Concilio provides social service programming in collaboration with the Department of Human Services, the Philadelphia Health Management Corporation and the Office of Housing and Urban Development, and is a lead member in the Eastern North Philadelphia Youth Services Coalition (ENPYSC), a coalition of Latino-based service providers that exists to bridge gaps and ensure coordinated services supporting youth in the Latino community. Concilio offers a range of culturally-oriented services including Adoptions <[http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=31](http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=31)>, Family Foster Care <[http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=31](http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=31)>, Parenting Classes <[http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=15&Itemid=33](http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=15&Itemid=33)>, Summer Youth Programming <[http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=16&Itemid=34](http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16&Itemid=34)>, and Housing Counseling <[http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=17&Itemid=35](http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=17&Itemid=35)>. Notably, Concilio has lead in the number of family reunifications among its clients; and <[http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=14:child-health-a-promotion&catid=3&Itemid=32](http://www.elconcilio.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14:child-health-a-promotion&catid=3&Itemid=32)>

WHEREAS, For half a century Concilio has consistently remained steadfast in its core values and mission to serve and support the needs of the Latino community, and to celebrate the Latino community's contributions throughout the City of Philadelphia and beyond. This year, Concilio, its dedicated staff and Executive Director Joanna Otero-Cruz will mark an outstanding 53 years of service, leadership, and support for Philadelphia's Puerto Rican and Latino community; and

WHEREAS, This anniversary event will be held at the Annual Puerto Rican Festival Awards Gala on September 19, 2015, celebrating the theme "Nuestra Trayectoria: De Puerto Rico a Philadelphia". As the economy in Puerto Rico shifted during the post World War II era, the migration of Puerto Ricans peaked in Philadelphia from 20,000 to over 1 million in less than 30 years. We celebrate those who sacrificed to face unknown challenges and risks in coming to Philadelphia. Through their struggle to provide a better life for their families, we continue to have a vibrant and strong Latino community today; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia hereby recognizes and honors Concilio on the occasion of its 53rd Anniversary of service and leadership in Philadelphia's Puerto Rican and Latino community. Congratulations!

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be sent to the Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations, Inc. "Concilio", as evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.