City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Declaring September 15, 2020 through October 15, 2020 as Hispanic Heritage Month throughout the City of Philadelphia to honor the role that Latinos have played and continue to play in the economic, cultural, and social development of our City and nation.

WHEREAS, Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of Latino American Citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central and South America; and

WHEREAS, The term Hispanic or Latino, refers to Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. On the 2010 Census form, people of Spanish, Hispanic and/or Latino origin could identify themselves as Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin; and

WHEREAS, The day of September 15th is significant as it's the anniversary of independence for many Latin American countries like Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is October 8, falls within this time of observation; and

WHEREAS, The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was later expanded by President Ronald Regan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period which was later enacted into law on August 17, 1988 to recognize Hispanic Ancestry and recognize the many accomplishments and contributions made by Hispanics nationwide; and

WHEREAS, Today, 58.9 million people or 18% of the American population are of Hispanic or Latino origin. This represents a significant increase from 2000, which registered the Hispanic population at 35.3 million or 13% of the total U.S. population; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2010 U.S. Census here in Philadelphia, Hispanics make up 12.3% of the population, in July 2019 the census estimate for Philadelphia's Hispanic population rose to 15.2%; and

WHEREAS, Latinos in the City of Philadelphia are unique leaders and exceptional role models in all professions and have distinguished themselves as smart and wise business owners, creating jobs, paying wages and demonstrating that they are a positive force in our local communities and neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the nation and the City of Philadelphia, Latinos make up a significant portion of the labor force, working as elected and public officials, CEOs, small business owners, entrepreneurs and homemakers who provide leadership, guidance and support of the values which strengthen our economy; and

WHEREAS, Despite COVID-19 and the cancellation of physical events, here in the City of Philadelphia the Office of Immigrant Affairs will host several virtual events celebrating the dedication of Hispanics to the community while aiming to unite individuals from all different cultures and countries with events; and

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WHEREAS, This year, it is imperative that Latinos participate in the 2020 Census to ensure fair federal funding to our communities in Philadelphia, representation in Congress, and a full accounting of our community's significance within the population of the United States; and

WHEREAS, As we look ahead to the most consequential election in decades, the result of which will set the course of our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that Latinos register to vote and make their voices heard in the leadership and future of our country; and

WHEREAS, On Friday, September 25, 2020 the Puerto Rican flag will be raised at City Hall to kick off the Puerto Rican Festival Week celebrating and promoting the understanding, respect, and appreciation for our many residents, cultures, and communities. On Sunday, September 27, 2020, in what would have been the 58th Puerto Rican Parade on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, we ask the Puerto Ricans observe the tradition, with smaller gatherings, following health guidance here in the City of Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby declare September 15, 2020 - October 15, 2020 as "Hispanic Heritage Month" in the City of Philadelphia, to recognize the many accomplishments and contributions made by Latinos, and encourage all residents to learn more about the people who have played such an important role in our history.

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