

Legislation Text

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Designating the week of Sunday, October 10 through Saturday, October 16, 2021 as “Italian American Heritage Week” in the City of Philadelphia and honoring Joe Piscopo as the Grand Marshall of the 2021 Philadelphia Italian American Parade. This year, the parade is also dedicated to the life and legacy of Anna C. Verna, longtime City Councilmember, a lifelong supporter of the Italian American Parade.

WHEREAS, The annual Philadelphia Italian American Parade began in South Philadelphia in 1957, and has since become one of the City’s premier ethnic celebrations. On October 10, 2021, the 1492 Society will host the annual parade. In addition to the active participation of the Delaware Valley’s Italian American community, the Philadelphia Italian American Parade tradition includes the world-famous Philadelphia Mummers string bands, outstanding high school and many other marching groups representing the various ethnic traditions of our great City. The Parade seeks to foster a spirit of multi-culturalism and respect for people of all ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, We honor the memories of Anna C. and Severino D. Verna lifelong South Philadelphia residents who were huge supporters of the Italian American Parade and helped to reenergize the parade back in the 1950s; and

WHEREAS, This year our Grand Marshall is Joe Piscopo, born Joseph Charles John Piscopo, on June 17, 1951 in Passaic, New Jersey, where he attended the West Essex High School and received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Broadcast Management from Jones College in Jacksonville, Florida. Joe is a widely known comedian, actor and radio host beloved for many of his on-screen characters. Joe started his career as a disc jockey eventually transitioning into a comedian and joining a newly formed ensemble cast with the undesirable task of trying to replace the original Saturday Night Live cast; and

WHEREAS, Joe spent several years as a cast member of Saturday Night Live bringing us such memorable characters as The Sports Guy, Mr. Wonderful and Doug Whiner along with celebrity impersonations of David Letterman, Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra to name but a few; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his acting and radio career, Joe also always has time for his many charitable causes which include the Boys and Girls Clubs, Big Brothers Big Sisters Joe also started his own foundation called “The Positive Impact Foundation”, which creates positive media for at-risk youth; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the annual Italian American Parade, festivities will include an Italian Festival showcasing the culture and cuisine of the people of Italy. The Italian Festival will take place at Marconi Plaza the day of the Parade and includes food, dance and music from the many diverse regions of Italy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby designate the week of October 10 through October 16, 2021 as “Italian American Heritage Week” and honor Joe Piscopo as Grand Marshall of the 2021 Italian American Day Parade, as well as the memory of Anna C. and Severino D. Verna.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Grand Marshall Joe Piscopo, further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.