

Legislation Text

File #: 220469, **Version:** 0

Recognizing the Month of June as Immigrant Heritage Month and Caribbean American Heritage Month in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Immigrants have had an extraordinary social and cultural influence on the United States of America, enriching the extraordinary character of our nation. Throughout the country's history, immigrants have built dynamic communities, started families, served in the military and public life, grown successful businesses, and strengthened the American economy; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is a proud city of immigrants. According to the Pew State of the City 2021 Report, about 14 percent of the City's 1.58 million residents were born outside of the United States. The largest immigrant populations in the City of Philadelphia come from China, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, India, Vietnam, Haiti, Mexico, Ukraine, Albania, and Korea; and

WHEREAS, More than a quarter of all Philadelphians in recent years-estimated at around 390,000 residents-were either immigrants or U.S. natives with immigrant parents, together comprising a population with significant potential to shape the city. They included nearly 76,000 children under age 18, or about 1 in 4 city children.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is a city rich in linguistic diversity with 24% of residents speaking languages other than English at home, many of them speaking their foreign language(s) in addition to English and demonstrating multilingualism as an asset; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants have been tireless leaders not only securing their own rights and access to equal opportunity, but have also campaigned to create a fairer and more just society for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, Immigrant Heritage Month is a nationwide effort to gather and share the inspirational stories of immigrants in the United States and 2022 marks the 9th annual Immigrant Heritage Month. It is powered nationally by FWD.us and is part of an ongoing effort to empower immigrants and allies to share stories and drive action that demonstrate how immigration is good for our communities, economy and country. The celebration began in 2014, and in 2016, President Obama officially declared June as Immigrant Heritage Month in a national address. In, 2021 President Biden followed suite and recognized June as Immigrant Heritage Month with a presidential proclamation on June 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the month of June, FWD.us and its partners and supporters will host events, speeches, and symposiums, all using the markers #IAmAnImmigrant and #CelebrateImmigrants; and

WHEREAS, These last two years we have seen the resilience of our local immigrant leaders and organizations and the ways they have stood up and shown up not just for their own communities but also for the greater Philadelphia region as we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery. This June we celebrate community, family, food, and love and lift up the stories about the ways our local residents and leaders have demonstrated resilience in the midst of great grief and loss; and

WHEREAS, Immigrant Business Week celebrates Philadelphia's immigrant business owners and the role they play in growing and strengthening Philadelphia's economy. The week also supports immigrant business owners by providing educational workshops and programs that can help them to start or grow their business. Immigrant Business Week programming runs from June 13 to June 19, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Caribbean Community of Philadelphia is the official Philadelphia partner agency of the National Caribbean American Heritage Month commemoration. Caribbean Community of Philadelphia will lead the 9th Annual Caribbean Heritage Day at Reading Terminal Market on June 25, 2022 and additional programs throughout the month including "Film Fashion & Conversations" at the Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential and the 6th UN World Oceans Day at Bartram's Garden; and

WHEREAS, Caribbean American leaders in Philadelphia play a significant role in fostering strong international relationships between Philadelphia and their sending countries, including Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Haiti, Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize the month of June as Immigrant Heritage Month and Caribbean American Heritage Month in the City of Philadelphia and celebrate the City's unwavering commitment to being a welcoming place that celebrates its vibrant immigrant community.