

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

Verj' truly yours,

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The United States observes National Hispanic Heritage Month every year from September 15 through October 15. During this period, the people of the United States are called upon to recognize and celebrate the myriad accomplishments and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans; and

WHEREAS, National Hispanic Heritage Month has been celebrated in the United States for more than 30 years. The observance began in 1968 under President Lyndon Johnson as a one-week celebration called Hispanic Heritage Week. In 1988, thanks in large part to the efforts of Senator Paul Simon from Illinois, the United States Congress passed and President Ronald Reagan signed into law Public Law 100-402, designating the "31-day period beginning September 15 and ending on October 15" as National Hispanic Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, September 15 was chosen as the starting point for an annual celebration honoring Americans of Hispanic descent because it marks the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The period holds additional significance as Mexico and Chile celebrate their annual independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively; and

WHEREAS, Today, National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated nationwide at local festivals, art shows, conferences, community gatherings, and other events emphasizing the rich history, culture, and traditions of Hispanics and Latinos; and

WHEREAS, Hispanics and Latinos have played a vital role during the COVID-19 pandemic as scientists working in labs across the country on a vaccine to fight the virus, as doctors and health care workers working long hours to save lives, and on the frontline as essential workers who are keeping our City and Nation running; and

WHEREAS, During National Hispanic Heritage Month, many Hispanic and Latino Americans who have answered the call to serve in the United States Armed Forces have earned military honors. Sixty-one people of Hispanic or Latino descent have been awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest United States military decoration awarded by the President of the United States, in the name of the United States Congress, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, Illinois has the fifth largest population of Hispanics and Latinos in the continental United States, and Latino and Hispanic-owned businesses represent a major economic engine in the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 820,000 Chicago residents identified as Hispanic or Latino for the 2020 census, making this the largest minority community in the City. In the 2020-2021 school year, more than 46% of Chicago Public School students identified as Hispanic or Latino, and over 9,000 Hispanic and Latino Americans contributed to the education mission of Chicago Public Schools as teachers, principals, and staff; and

WHEREAS, National Hispanic Heritage Month provides Chicagoans with an opportunity to reflect on our shared history and to celebrate the rich mosaic of people and cultures that have built and strengthened our Nation and that have contributed to a legacy of freedom and diversity that we hold dear to heart; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this fourteenth day of September, 2021, do hereby reaffirm our prior designation of the 31-day period beginning on September 15 and ending on October 15 as Hispanic Heritage Month in Chicago, and encourage all Chicagoans to acknowledge the contributions of Hispanics and Latinos to the vibrant culture, identity, and economy of our great City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, as part of this year's observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, the City of Chicago honors our City's Hispanic and Latino essential workers, who persisted amid an unprecedented pandemic to help their communities. These essential workers include health care workers, grocery store clerks, warehouse workers, bus drivers, custodians, domestic workers, first responders, educators, activists, and many others who ensured that their family and communities were informed, protected, and provided with appropriate resources during this national health crisis.