

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The United States observes National Hispanic Heritage Month every year from September 15th through October 15th to recognize and celebrate the many contributions made by Hispanics and Latinos, which have shaped our society and culture, built and strengthened our Nation, and helped to make the United States a diverse, thriving, and vibrant democracy; and

WHEREAS, 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 Illinois Senator Paul Simon, 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. Mexico, Chile, and Belize celebrate their independence days on September 16, September 18 and September 21, 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, and myriad accomplishments and contributions, of Hispanic and Latino Americans; and

WHEREAS, During National Hispanic Heritage Month, the United States military honors the 1.2 million Hispanic and Latino men and women who, over the course of our history, have answered the call to serve in our Nation's Armed Forces. Sixty-one people of Hispanic or Latino descent have been awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest United States military decoration awarded by Congress for gallantry and bravery in combat. As of September 2018, 136,000 Hispanic soldiers were serving in the United States Army alone, comprising 13.6% of its total armed force; and

WHEREAS, National Hispanic Heritage Month has special meaning in Chicago. Approximately 780,000 Chicago residents identify as Hispanic or Latino. Over 46% of Chicago Public School students identify as Hispanic or Latino. More than 9,000 Hispanic and Latino Americans contribute to the educational mission of the Chicago Public Schools as teachers, principals and staff. Hispanic- and Latino-owned businesses represent the fastest growing segment of small businesses in the State of Illinois, contributing immeasurably to the well-being of our local economy; and

WHEREAS, National Hispanic Heritage Month provides Chicagoans with an opportunity to reflect on our shared history as Americans; and to celebrate the rich mosaic of people and cultures who worked together to build and defend our Nation, and contributed to the 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 eighteenth of September, 2019, do hereby designate the 31-day period beginning on September 15 and ending on October 15 each year as "Hispanic Heritage Month" in Chicago, and encourage all Chicagoans to acknowledge the contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the culture, identity and

economy of our great City.

^ - Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and
1(1'- ji'SSen^sd bu Alderman Roberto Maldonado q*s, September 18, 2019

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