



PROCLAMATION OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Hispanic and Latino communities were nationally recognized for their histories, cultures, and influence when President Lyndon Johnson proclaimed “National Hispanic Heritage Week” on September 17, 1968; and

WHEREAS, observance was expanded by President Ronald Reagan to cover a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on October 15, on August 17, 1988, and on September 14, 1989, President George H.W. Bush became the first president to declare the 31-day period from September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, September 15 was chosen as the first day of observance because it coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. It also coincides with Mexico’s independence on September 16 and Chile’s on September 18 - all who declared their independence from Spain in 1821 and Belize who declared their independence from Great Britain on September 21, 1981; and

WHEREAS, the theme for 2021’s observance is “Esperanza: A Celebration of Hispanic Heritage and Hope.” The theme invites us to celebrate Hispanic Heritage and to reflect on how great our tomorrow can be if we hold onto our resilience and hope. It encourages us to reflect on all of the contributions Hispanics have made in the past and will continue to make in the future. It is also a reminder that we are stronger together; and

WHEREAS, the term “Hispanic” generally refers to the way that Latin Americans are united through their connection to Spain and their links to Spanish culture and tradition. “Latino” is used to refer to the way that Latin Americans are connected to one another via their common history and culture; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, “Latino” officially appeared on government documents as an option alongside “Hispanic.” Since 1980 and 2000, “Hispanic” and “Latino” have also become part of the U.S. Census, respectively; and

WHEREAS, according to 2020 US Census, Latinos remain the largest minority group in the United States, and Latinos drove the country’s demographic growth to 62.1 million, and Latinos accounted for 51.1 percent of the country’s growth, rising to 18.7 percent of the U.S. population. That means the Hispanic population grew by 23 percent from 2010 to 2020; and

WHEREAS, the employee Resource Group (ERG) Latinos Unidos at the Port of Seattle has embraced the use of “Latino” to describe the unity of their culture, history and their future. The Office of Equity Diversity at the Port has also made an intentional decision to use “Latino” in place of “Hispanic;” and

WHEREAS, Latinos of all generations and recent immigrants continue to make great contributions to our nation, our region, and our Port; and

WHEREAS, the Port continues to take proactive steps to increase diversity at the Port of Seattle amongst all diverse populations; and

WHEREAS, once a year, all Port employees are asked to voluntarily self-identify their race. According to current data, 5.7% of employees self-identify as Hispanic/Latino; and

WHEREAS, this data reflects that the Port has work to do to increase the representation of Latino employees. The Port continues to review and revise policies and practices through an equity lens, partnering with Workforce Development to build talent pipelines, increasing recruitment and outreach efforts to Latino professionals in the Communities we serve, and providing recognition, training and learning activities to managers and employees about the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, representation matters.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Port of Seattle Commission hereby recognizes September 15 - October 15 as Latino Heritage Month at the Port of Seattle.

Proclaimed by the Port of Seattle Commission this 14 day of September, 2021.

Port of Seattle Commission