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Submitted in Rules Committee
Council File No: 15-1343
Item No.: 1

~~Resolution~~ Communication from
Councilmembers
Buscaino, Cedillo,
Ryu, and Englander

June 14, 2017

Hon. Herb J. Wesson Jr.,
Chair, Rules, Elections, Intergovernmental Relations & Neighborhoods Committee
C/O City Clerk
200 N. Spring Street, Room 360
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairman Wesson:

The celebration of our diversity and variety of cultures is part of what defines us as a City and nation. This has become even more apparent in light of the current climate in our society highlighting the need for racial and ethnic harmony, and why we support the creation of Immigrant Heritage Day, to succeed Columbus Day, in the City of Los Angeles.

For nearly a century, Italian Americans have celebrated Columbus Day as a way of recognizing their Italian American heritage. Those ideals under which the holiday was founded upon remain relevant today; the recognition of the hundreds of years of immigration to America and the notion that anyone can come here, work hard, succeed and achieve the American Dream.

Those who sought to create Columbus Day back in the 1930s did so as a means to align themselves to a figure that, at the time, represented American patriotism, however, as times have changed it is less about the man and more about celebrating immigrant heritage and the contributions that they have made to their communities.

We believe that it is this concept, the celebration of immigrants, the melding of cultures, the beauty of people who have multiple backgrounds of European, African, Asian, and Indigenous heritage that reflects the reality of who we are as a people today. This is who we are as a City. This is Los Angeles.

While we support the creation of a separate Indigenous People's Day holiday, this is not a zero-sum game where one culture must win at the expense of others. We believe that it is important

to remain true to the spirit behind the founding of the holiday on the second Monday of October, which is not about honoring one man, but about a universal theme, that has become ubiquitous with the celebration of not only Italian American Heritage, but the celebration of all cultures, and the acknowledgement of the sacrifices and contributions made by their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents to this great nation.

This is why we support the creation of a holiday celebrating Immigrant Heritage, in addition to an Indigenous People's Day holiday, because it recognizes the importance of unity and diversity. This is what has made our City succeed since its founding by the original settlers, *the Pobladores*, who were themselves a mixture of Indigenous, African, and European descent.

Those who created Columbus Day were seeking a nation that is inclusive -- as a way to empower immigrants and celebrate their diversity. This day recognizes the beginning of worldwide immigration to America. It truly is a celebration of immigrants coming here to seek a better life for themselves and their families. Immigrant Heritage Day would be an appropriate way to recognize the contributions made by those who have made Los Angeles the world-class City that it is today.

Sincerely,








