

15-1343

**July 20, 2017**

Dear Mayor Garcetti and Council Members,

We respectfully ask that you consider this before voting.

**Reasons to Retain Columbus Day in Los Angeles:**

- 1.** We support Columbus Day! We are the millions of Italian-Americans living in the U.S.A, raising and educating families, and working along-side other Patriotic Americans of goodwill. We are happy to be a big part of the economic, social, and cultural community in many major cities including Los Angeles and Los Angeles County. We are among the millions of voters who support democracy and continue to build a strong America.
- 2.** We can't believe that the City of Los Angeles is even considering removing from the city records an American National Holiday dear to the proud Italian-American citizens and their generations of American descendants because " there is nothing in modern history that should provoke this downright daylight-robbery in our City of the Angels..."
- 3.** There really is no legitimate reason for this travesty! To do this to please another group or nationality is in fact displaying favoritism. We should ask ourselves: What is the real reason behind this movement? Do we really know? Think about it.
- 4.** In reality, this has become a matter of "flagrant discrimination against Columbus; against one group of people: The Italian-Americans, their heritage and the heritage of their proud descendants living in America and abroad". This is an attack against their very freedom to enjoy assembling and celebrating. And to assemble and to celebrate is a human right! How can we not protect everyone's rights! Whatever happened to the peoples' First Amendment rights! How can we ignore the Bill of Rights!
- 5. If the Indigenous People wish a day named for them, they could select any other day not October 12, 1492, a day known and respected throughout the World as the day, 525 years ago, when Columbus historically-arrived at San Salvador in what would later be called the America's.**
- 6.** Besides, when one studies the "true" Historical Records of World Explorers, we would learn that Columbus was by far a better human being than most.

**7.** Obviously, we did not know Columbus personally, but we feel we must take “any action replacing Columbus Day” personally, as a discrimination against one culture in favor of another...like slapping one race in the face. While it may not seem obvious at first sight, on second thought, such an action verges on a type of new-wave racism.

**8.** Let us take to heart a bit of Indigenous peoples’ actions in 1493. Let us not forget that the Indigenous people, a proven war-like people, massacred the 39 men Columbus had temporarily left behind on the island of Hispaniola (because he only had 2 ships left to return to Spain).

**9.** If the Indigenous people really want to celebrate their culture, fine. Give them a day...there are so many days in a year. **But Do Not Take Someone else’s, Another Culture’s, Holiday Away!**

**10.** When Los Angeles Historians look back on this contentious point, they will most likely wonder what Los Angeles was thinking! Why would this even be brought up for a vote?

**11. Let’s speak about traditions.** The “Columbus roots” are deeply-embedded in our Nation. Records show that there are hundreds of cities, towns, parks, etc. in America, and the whole wide world, named Columbus, Columbia or Colon (Columbus’ actual European surname). In fact, we proudly sing an American patriotic song: “Oh, Columbia the Gem of the Ocean”. Statues of Columbus abound in America.

**12.** When our Forefathers were voting on what to name our National Capitol, it was decided to call it Washington, D. C. **D.C. stands for the District of Columbia.**

**13.** Last but certainly not least: What would be the result of replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous People Day, besides whole-hearted disbelief and sorrow among many of its citizens over such an injustice? A significant financial-result would be that The Columbus Day Sales Days, which last for about one week, would cease to exist and these have always been excellent for our economy.

**14. Be proactive! When you save an established holiday which the majority of Americans historically-support, you stand-up for all Americans.** Make us proud. Please stand-up for Freedom and for Equal Rights for all.

Thank you, Eleanor and Elaine Bersano, sisters ([rainbowfour@peoplepc.com](mailto:rainbowfour@peoplepc.com))

Members of: The Order of the Sons of Italy in America (OSIA); The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE); Lions Clubs International (LCI)

*Sincerely* *Joe Russo, Sons of Italy*