

City of Los Angeles Mail Michael Espinosa <michael.espinosa@lacity.org>

Personal Letter of Support for Indigenous Peoples Day

1 message

mmm velour <mmmvelour@yahoo.com> Mon, Aug 28, 2017 at 5:50 PM

Reply-To: mmm velour <mmmvelour@yahoo.com>

To: "Michael.Espinosa@LACity.org" <Michael.Espinosa@lacity.org>

Cc: Stacy Creacy <1910otter@gmail.com>

To the Honorable Herb Wesson, President of the Los Angeles City Council:

To the Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council:

I am writing to express my strong support for Council File 15-1343. As a member of the Los Angeles Indigenous community I offer the following personal testament:

Before the Ship

"Wake up Mama! It's snowing and I don't have school today and I want to take the dogs to play in the forest and go to the creek and there is no school! Can we go? Please!"

I starred up at the joyful eyes of my six-year-old child.

"Of Course we can! Go eat some cereal and let me get ready"

She was so excited and it seemed like the perfect day for just the two of us. We started walking and let our dog Sam off his leash. She ran and played in the snow with him and it was a beautiful morning until....

"Mama why aren't we going to the parade? Mama, how can you discover something if someone was already there? At school they said that we were discovered here by someone that was on a big ship. I think he had a bus" I smiled at her...."they are talking about a man not a bus. His name was Columbus"

I remembered being her age. I was told that people came from a far away place and tried to kill all those who lived here already. That they tricked them into believing they wanted to be friends and then later deemed that the natives were not even people. "Savages" my grandmother stated shaking her head. I remember being afraid they would come back. I remembered being sad when they said even the animals in the forest ran away. That they would kill an animal and leave it to rot. I remembered the parade and hiding behind my mothers coat. Most of all.....I remember being told to keep quiet.

She was so unaware and so innocent. She was perfect. She had never been told she was a "half bred" or to "go back to a reservation". This day would pass and now is not the time. My child is too young to be afraid.

A half hour later she returned to her line of questioning only this time I stopped walking.

"Was he nice? Were the people that came on the ship nice people"?

My heart started pounding. I was angry and scarred at the same time. She trusted me. I knew the answer and in that moment all I could say to my child was....

"Yes honey. I believe they were very nice and happy to see people like us. They just discovered a new place is all. Like when we find a cave or a hot spring."

Her next words brought tears to my eyes. It was as if she knew I wasn't telling her the truth.

"Do the people that were already here have a day? Do we have a day?"

"No sweetheart, not yet. Get your dog back on the leach. It's getting too cold to stay out"

I closed my eyes and let the snow flakes collect on my lashes. She will find out. She will change and become afraid or quiet or both. This will all happen but, not today.

On August 19th 2017, the day after my daughter's twenty-third birthday, I ran up the stairs of her home and into her bedroom at 11:30 pm. She was asleep and half buried in college textbooks.

I had just come from the Echo Park rising festival. I brushed the hair out of her face and whispered:

"Wake up Ciera. People are talking, speaking out in the open and they are not being told to be quiet and other people are listening and it's amazing... Indigenous Peoples Day! They are considering it right here in LA."

She opened her eyes and smiled:

" A day for the people that were here before the ship came. "

She remembered, after all this time.

Thank you for noting that there were "people before the ship".

To Indigenous people, all life and all things that give life are worth the same.

It is in the differences of cultures and the acceptance of all forms of life that we find that we are all to be celebrated.

Thank you for your consideration of Indigenous People's Day.

Respectfully,

Stacy L Creacy

Pueblo Ute

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August 28, 2017

Los Angeles City Council
200 N Spring St
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilors:

As the Principal Chief of the largest tribal government in Oklahoma and in the United States, I ask you to consider renaming the second Monday in October "Indigenous Peoples' Day." This bold move would replace Columbus Day, and it is something that would honor the tribal governments of California and Native people across the state, as well as in the city of Los Angeles. As the second largest city in America, this is a true opportunity to celebrate the 110 sovereign Indian Nations in California, each with a unique culture.

The National Congress of American Indians has spearheaded the shift to Indigenous Peoples' Day, and I applaud that effort. It is a truer and more accurate title, because Native people had a history and heritage in the Americas, including California, long before Christopher Columbus set sail.

A transition from Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day would signify Los Angeles as a leader in honoring the culture, heritage and traditional lifeways of Native peoples in history, as well as recognizing California's federally recognized tribes that are all modern, sovereign governments. As you may know, Los Angeles was a destination location for so many tribal citizens, including Cherokees, when the federal government enacted the Indian Relocation Act of 1956. Many families were moved off their historical tribal and family homelands to modern cities like Los Angeles.

The Cherokee Nation, which has more than 350,000 enrolled citizens across the world, does not and will not ever recognize Columbus Day. In addition to honoring Indigenous Peoples' Day, we also celebrate this day as Cherokee Nation Leadership Day, a time to honor our tribe's scholars, artists, entrepreneurs, military veterans and leaders who contributed immeasurably to our unique culture and to our substantial role in the history of the United States of America. The Cherokee Nation would not be thriving and as strong as it is today without the dedication and sacrifice of our ancestors and our historical leaders.

Without a doubt, Native people have significantly contributed to city of Los Angeles. Other communities across the country and around the world have accepted this evolution. I hope you will support this idea and embrace Indigenous Peoples' Day in Los Angeles.

Wado,

Bill John Baker, Cherokee Nation Principal Chief

Letter of Support for Indigenous People's Day

1 message

Rachel Hamburg <rachel.hamburg@gmail.com> Mon, Aug 28, 2017 at 10:02 PM

To: Michael.Espinosa@lacity.org

August 28, 2017

To the Honorable Herb Wesson, President of the Los Angeles City Council

To the Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council

I am writing to express my strong support for Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell's effort to repeal Columbus Day and replace it with Indigenous People's Day (Council File 15-1343) in the City of Los Angeles on the second Monday in October.

Recognizing the contributions, history, and sacrifices made by the original inhabitants of the Los Angeles area is long overdue. In recent years, there is a greater awareness of the well documented history of the Americas from the time Christopher Columbus set foot on the shores of what is historically referred to as Hispaniola in 1492. Columbus's journey and subsequent journeys to the "New World" set in motion a genocide that would last centuries, the effects of which are still felt today.

Later, the Spanish missionaries came to California, decimating native Tribes to the point of extinction in some cases. It is time for L.A. to reflect on the legacy of these actions and create a permanent tribute to the people who were oppressed, enslaved, and slaughtered.

Thank you for voting in favor of replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day.

Sincerely,

Rachel Hamburg

3718 Clarington Avenue #21

Los Angeles, CA 90034

rachel.hamburg@gmail.com

support letter for Indigenous People's day

1 message

shahan suzmeyan <suzmeyan@hotmail.com> Mon, Aug 28, 2017 at 6:14 PM

To: "Michael.Espinosa@LACity.org" <Michael.Espinosa@lacity.org>

8/28/17

To the Honorable Herb Wesson, President of the Los Angeles City Council:

To the Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council:

It is time to correct this great injustice and recognize our brothers and sisters as the original inhabitants of our great city. Only by recognizing the 2nd week of October as Indigenous People's Day can we begin to heal the wrongs perpetrated at the hands of our invading armies.

I applaud Council-member Mitch O'Farrell and the Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council in this forward thinking initiative and urge all to show up in Council Chambers on August 30 in support of Indigenous Peoples Day

Shahan
Suzmeyan

Governing Board Member
East Hollywood Neighborhood Council
1115 N Berendo St.
LA, CA 90029
213 924 6442
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In support of Indigenous Day...LA

1 message

Gary De La Rosa <gary.delarosa@lacity.org> Mon, Aug 28, 2017 at 5:08 PM

To: Michael Espinosa <michael.espinosa@lacity.org>

Cc: Marisol Salguero <marisol.rodriguez@lacity.org>

Michael Espinosa,

I am writing in support of the City changing the October Columbus Day holiday to Indigenous People's Day. And to that point it is the DATE that is important over the Monday holiday. Day off or not, the remembrance of this truly world-impacting moment and being aware of the impact upon the cultures and peoples of these lands that it would and still does have, is what matters.

In this moment of discussion revolving about the Southern Confederacy statues, it is best to remember that our past history collectively (here in LA, the USA, and even world-wide) is one of questionable remembrance often mired in nationalism and justification. As with a bike, one must maintained and adjust as the bike ages and its function changes. History, too, requires maintenance.

Almost 425 years later there is an opportunity to step out with equity and begin a look back at how we understand our collective story. Not to place blame but to know and understand what occurred in our name. Then, to add to the journey that is the USA a fuller and more collective history. Not to hide any of the past, or displace the good or the bad, but to enrich the tale and democratically remember how we came to this time and place in history. And to acknowledge that there was a "place" here before October 12, 1492.

From personal experience I know that many past injustices have been lost to our knowledge of history. To those who suffered, were marginalized over these past century's, to those first nations here before the "exchange," this is but a start in the healing and a small step in perhaps not losing their story.

I thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Gary De La Rosa

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Gary De La Rosa

H R A

Rapid Response Team

EWDD

213-744-7177

Los Angeles indigenous people`s day

1 message

charles lxquiac <ixquiacc1@yahoo.com> Mon, Aug 28, 2017 at 9:29 AM

Reply-To: charles lxquiac <ixquiacc1@yahoo.com>

To: "Michael.Espinosa@LACity.org" <Michael.Espinosa@lacity.org>

Los Angeles, August 28 2017

To the Honorable Herb Wesson, President of the Los Angeles City Council

To the Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council

I am writing to express my strong support for Council member Mitch O'Farrell's effort to repeal Columbus Day and replace it with Indigenous People's Day (Council File 15-1343) in the City of Los Angeles, on the second Monday in October.

Recognizing the contributions, history, and sacrifices made by the original inhabitants of the Los Angeles area is long overdue. In recent years, there is a greater awareness of the well documented history of the Americas from the time Christopher Columbus set foot on the shores of what is historically referred to as Hispaniola in 1492. Indeed, Columbus returned three additional times to the "New World", setting in motion a genocide that would last centuries, the effects thereof are still felt today.

Later, the Spanish missionaries came to California, decimating native Tribes to the point of extinction in some cases. It is time for Los Angeles to reflect on the legacy of these actions and create a permanent tribute to the people who made it possible for the rest of us to make a life for ourselves on the lands that the original inhabitants were so mercilessly removed from.

Thank you for voting in favor of replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day.

Sincerely,

Carlos lxquiac
4919 layman ave. Pico rivera CA 90660
626-888-4139
ixquiacc1@yahoo.com

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Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

August 28, 2017

Los Angeles City Council
200 N Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable Councilmembers:

On behalf of the largest advocacy organization representing the uprooted indigenous peoples of the Armenian Highland, we offer our unequivocal support for transforming Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

As you know, the Armenian people have long sought recognition for the 1915-1923 Armenian Genocide, during which Ottoman Turkey eradicated the crumbling empire's indigenous Christian constituency, as well as recognition of the Republic of Artsakh – one of the twin states of the Armenian homeland.

One of the most important international documents in support of the Armenian Cause is the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In September 2007, when the Declaration passed, Azerbaijan – which has been attempting to conquer and occupy Artsakh and eradicate its indigenous Armenian population and their culture – abstained from voting, while Turkey – which continues to deny the Armenian Genocide and distort the region's ancient Armenian history, voted "yes" with an explicit disclaimer that its vote was cast with the understanding that Turkey had no indigenous peoples, and that the declaration didn't challenge states' territorial integrity.

Despite Azerbaijan's abstention of and Turkey's qualified support for the Declaration, we believe its principles support our Cause and the plight of many other indigenous peoples across the globe. For example, the Declaration spells out the right to recognize oneself as indigenous: all people, according to the declaration, have the right "to consider themselves different." Article 33 states that "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions;" therefore, Turkey's recognition or not-recognition of Armenians as indigenous is not paramount to advocating for our rights as indigenous peoples. Equally important, the Declaration recognizes the diversity of culture, religion, region and other backgrounds among indigenous populations: "the situation of indigenous peoples varies from region to region and from country to country and that the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration."

In regards to homeland loss, which the Armenian community was a victim to like no other people of the 20th century, the Declaration reads, "indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests."

The Declaration also alludes to cultural genocide, as stated in Article 8 that "Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture."



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

Speaking about communities who have faced destruction, Article 20 states that “Indigenous peoples deprived of their means of subsistence and development are entitled to just and fair redress.”

Incidentally, the UN Convention on the Punishment of Genocide doesn’t provide for such redress.

In addressing land ownership, Article 26 makes the following three points: “1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired. 2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired. 3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.”

The above article has been likely the main concern for the Turkish Republic. If read directly, it implies that Armenians have the right to their sacred Mountains in Turkey, such as Mount Ararat, although others can also contest “ownership” (an idea that doesn’t exist in many indigenous communities throughout the world). The article doesn’t imply that the Republic of Armenia can claim lands from Turkey based on the Declaration. But Armenian Diasporas – those who wish, let alone dare, return and live in Turkish state, seem to have the right to return. If a land cannot be returned, though, compensation can be demanded. According to Article 28, Point 1: “Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.”

As an uprooted indigenous peoples who appreciate the opportunities we have found in our new homeland built, in part, on a grave historical injustice to the native peoples of this great country, we are encouraged by the growing movement to bring awareness to the rights of indigenous peoples, whether through international declarations or local level re-designation of city holidays.

Please add our name to the many voices advocating for the establishment of Indigenous Peoples Day.

Warm Regards,

Nora Hovsepien, Esq.

Chair

Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region