
City Council

Motion without Notice

MM46.9	ACTION			Ward: All
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Requesting the Government of Canada to Proclaim Hispanic Heritage Month - by Councillor Palacio, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pantalone

- * Notice of this Motion has not been given. A two-thirds vote is required to waive notice.*
- * This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*
- * This Motion has been deemed urgent.*

Recommendations

Councillor Palacio, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pantalone, recommends that:

1. City Council formally request the Government of Canada to proclaim April as “Hispanic Heritage Month” for the entire country.

Summary

In 2009 the City of Toronto requested the Province to proclaim April 2010 as Hispanic Heritage Month in Ontario. On December 3, 2009 the Provincial Legislative unanimously adopted the bill to designate April of each year as Hispanic Heritage Month. This bill was supported by all three Provincial parties and recognizes the cultural, social and economic contribution of the Hispanic community to Ontario.

The Hispanic population in Toronto is among the fastest growing ethnic groups in the City, representing over 21 countries across four continents, reflecting the rich and broader diasporas of the Spanish speaking peoples. Several ethnic groups are recognized by the City annually with their own Heritage or Cultural Month including South Asian Heritage Month, Black History Month, Irish Heritage and Cultural Appreciation Month, and Portuguese Month. Hispanic Heritage Month will be proclaimed by the City and the Province in 2010, and this motion requests the Government of Canada to follow Ontario and Toronto’s lead.

There are 740,760 Hispanics in Canada. Between 2001 and 2006, the Spanish speaking population in Canada grew by 29.9%, with nearly one-half of all Canadian Hispanics living in Toronto or Montreal.

Hispanic Heritage Month would give Canadians as a whole an opportunity to celebrate, enjoy and experience the rich heritage of Canada's Hispanic cultures. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the many outstanding contributions Spanish speaking peoples have made to Canadian society. Several events take place annually throughout the country and this recognition of their social, cultural and economic success would compliment them.

The concept of a Hispanic Heritage Month is supported in principle by the Hispanic Development Council, Centre for Spanish-Speaking Peoples, Canadian Hispanic Congress, Toronto Catholic District School Board, Toronto District School Board, and a large number of Hispanic community leaders and community organizations.

(Submitted to City Council on February 22 and 23, 2010 as MM46.9)