

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of October 2022 as "Italian-American
2 Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Explorer Christopher Columbus, the son of a wool
4 merchant, was born in Genoa, Italy, around 1451; and

5 WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus was determined to find a
6 quicker route west from Europe to Asia and embarked on what
7 would become four voyages across the Atlantic Ocean starting in
8 1492; and

9 WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus landed upon an island in the
10 Bahamas during his initial voyage, and his journey became a
11 catalyst for centuries of exploration of the Americas; and

12 WHEREAS, Columbus set into motion the widespread transfer of
13 people, plants, animals and cultures between the Old and New
14 Worlds; and

15 WHEREAS, While Italian adventurers have always been a part of
16 American history, it was not until the 1820s that Italian
17 immigrants began moving to the United States in sizable numbers;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, A feudal society, high unemployment and oppressive
3 taxes coupled with natural disasters, disease, poverty and
4 famine, gave many reasons for Italians to look for freedom and
5 opportunities abroad; and

6 WHEREAS, While educated Italian professionals also emigrated,
7 many Italian immigrants arrived relatively unskilled, but soon
8 helped fuel a booming industrial economy by providing labor for
9 American factories and mines and helping to build roads, dams,
10 tunnels and other infrastructure; and

11 WHEREAS, As Italian Americans began settling in the country's
12 major cities, they faced religious and ethnic discrimination
13 which occasionally led to brutal violence; and

14 WHEREAS, For this reason, Italian Americans started
15 celebrating the life and accomplishments of Christopher Columbus
16 as a way for residents of Italian descent to be accepted by
17 their new homeland; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed
19 Columbus Day as a national holiday; and

20 WHEREAS, We credit Christopher Columbus with Italian
21 immigration to the New World and what is now Pennsylvania; and

22 WHEREAS, Currently, there are more than 16 million Americans
23 of Italian heritage in the United States and more than 1.4
24 million Americans of Italian heritage residing in Pennsylvania;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, In 1905, the Order Sons of Italy in America was
27 formed, with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania to follow in 1913;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, More recently, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania
30 became an independent organization and was renamed the Grand

1 Lodge of Pennsylvania Sons and Daughters of Italy, existing to
2 promote education, encourage the dissemination of Italian
3 culture, organize programs for patriotic and humanitarian
4 purposes and combat discrimination while protecting and
5 upholding the positive image of Italian heritage; therefore be
6 it

7 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the month of October 2022
8 as "Italian-American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania and
9 acknowledge the important role of early immigrants in our
10 Commonwealth's history.