

**BY COUNCIL MEMBER GABRIELA SANTIAGO-ROMERO**

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

**WHEREAS,** Since 1968, the United States has recognized September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month, which is a time to celebrate Hispanic culture and contributions to our communities and our nation; and

**WHEREAS,** The date of September 15 is significant because it marks the anniversary of independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence on September 16 and 18 respectively; and

**WHEREAS,** The US Census Bureau estimates that the Hispanic population is more than 60 million, making Hispanic Americans the largest racial or ethnic minority group in the United States; and

**WHEREAS,** Hispanic Americans have made valuable contributions to every aspect of American society—in medicine, law, business, technology, civic engagement, military service, government, and culture; and

**WHEREAS,** There are over 375,000 Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States, yielding close to \$500,000 annually and employing 2.9 million employees, and Hispanic Americans have the highest participation in the labor force of any racial or ethnic group; and

**WHEREAS,** There are over 50,000 Hispanic residents in Detroit, and Census data shows that the population continues to rise; and

**WHEREAS,** Detroit's Hispanic population largely originated in the 1920s, as Mexican immigrants settled in the area seeking jobs provided by Detroit's bustling industrial sector and fleeing political turmoil in Mexico and discrimination in the American southwest; and

**WHEREAS,** These immigrants began settling in southwest Detroit, which became a haven for new immigrants and refugees, a tradition that continues to this day in the community and through organizations such as Freedom House and the Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center; and

**WHEREAS,** Over many decades, southwest Detroit grew into a vibrant community, which later became known as Mexican Town and continues to be the heart and epicenter of Hispanic business and culture in Metro Detroit; and

**WHEREAS,** Despite large-scale economic downturns that have negatively affected both Detroit and the United States, Mexican Town is home to hundreds of flourishing Hispanic-owned small businesses that exemplify resiliency, community, and ingenuity; and

**WHEREAS,** Even as we celebrate Hispanic communities, we must also commit to combating the animosity and xenophobia that continues to be directed at Hispanic Americans and immigrant communities; and

**WHEREAS,** The incredible contributions and heritage of the Hispanic communities have helped us build a better Detroit and a better Nation; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

**RESOLVED,** That the Detroit City Council hereby recognizes September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month; **NOW, BE IT FINALLY**

**RESOLVED,** That the Detroit City Clerk's Office provide a copy of this resolution to the Mexicantown Community Development Corporation, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, and the Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.