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Last Updated: 05/3/2023



National Hispanic Heritage Week, 1982

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Hispanic men and women have played a vital role in the development and progress of the United States, opening new frontiers and establishing missions and settlements that were the forerunners of some of our most important and thriving urban and cultural centers. Across the southern regions of our great country, from Florida to California, Hispanic explorers, pioneers, and settlers have helped to shape this vast land.

Since the time of our Revolution, when U.S. leaders shared with leaders in Latin America the common struggle of lifting the bonds of colonial rule, through the present, peoples of the Americas have shared great democratic ideals. In the words of Benito Juarez, a contemporary of Abraham Lincoln, "Respect for the rights of others, between individuals, as between nations, is the basis of peace." These words convey the essence of our laws and values, preserving the dignity and equality of all our people.

Hispanics continue to make significant and enduring contributions to our society, enriching us intellectually, spiritually, and culturally.

In times of peace, the accomplishments of these Americans in science, technology, politics, the arts, and other important fields have greatly enhanced our way of life. In times of war, Hispanic Americans have defended our nation with pride and courage. Thirty-nine of them have received the Medal of Honor, America's highest military decoration. This is a higher proportion of such heroes than in any other group, and we salute their sacrifices and bravery.

As did earlier decades, the 1980s present Hispanic Americans with new opportunities to pursue their goals and advance our society. Like those before them today's Hispanic Americans meet their challenges and responsibilities with dignity and a creative spirit. Their energetic commitment to hard work and their determination to participate fully in the American Dream bring strength and inspiration to us all.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved September 17, 1968 (82 Stat. 848), authorized and requested the President to proclaim the week which includes September 15 and 16 as National Hispanic Heritage Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning September 12, 1982, as National Hispanic Heritage Week in honor of Hispanic men and women. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to observe the proud history of Hispanic peoples. I ask all Americans to join together in peace, brotherhood, and pride in being one Nation under God.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 30th day of July in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

Ronald Reagan