

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

22-116

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

June 6, 2017

To recognize National Caribbean-American Heritage Month and the Caribbean-American community as an integral and celebrated cultural community in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, in 1996, District of Columbia residents of Caribbean heritage first conceived a national celebration of Caribbean-American heritage, initiated by Doreen Thompson, Esq. with the support of Denys Vaughn Cooke, Errol McLaren, and Robert Nichols, all of Ward 4, and Dr. Basil Buchanan of Ward 1;

WHEREAS, in 2001, Mayor Anthony Williams first proclaimed June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month through the continued efforts of Doreen Thompson, Esq. and Dr. Basil Buchanan;

WHEREAS, the campaign moved to the national stage through the efforts of Dr. Claire Nelson of the Institute of Caribbean Studies, located in the District of Columbia;

WHEREAS, Representative Barbara Lee of California spearheaded the bipartisan, bicameral legislative effort to recognize Caribbean-American Heritage Month nationally, appointing staff person Jamila Thompson, of Caribbean heritage, to coordinate the policy strategy;

WHEREAS, the efforts of Representative Lee and Jamila Thompson resulted in President George W. Bush declaring June 2006 as National Caribbean-American Heritage Month; which is now recognized annually by the sitting President of the United States of America;

WHEREAS, Caribbean immigrants have contributed to the well-being of American society since the country's founding;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia has benefitted from Caribbean-Americans through their contributions to our city and nation, including the Ali Family of Ben's Chili Bowl, Dr. Wayne A.I. Frederick, President of Howard University, and entertainers with Caribbean roots, including Lamman Rucker and Dave Chappelle;

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WHEREAS, countless residents of Caribbean heritage serve the District of Columbia in the areas of public service, education, business, technology, healthcare, family services, the arts, and culture in every corner of the city;

WHEREAS, Ward 4 has been the historical base for the Caribbean community, continues to have the largest number of persons of Caribbean heritage in the District of Columbia, and includes many Caribbean-American restaurants and food businesses, as well as a major church of worship for the Caribbean community; and

WHEREAS, June of 2016 is the 15th anniversary of celebrating Caribbean-American Heritage Month in the District of Columbia.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Caribbean-American Heritage Month and Caribbean-American Community Recognition Resolution of 2017”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes the outstanding contributions and valued accomplishments of the Caribbean-American community in the District of Columbia and the United States of America, and recognizes District residents of Caribbean heritage on the occasion of National Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.