

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

24-53

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

June 1, 2021

To recognize Caribbean-American Heritage Month and the Caribbean-American community as a valued and celebrated cultural community in the District of Columbia, and to declare the month of June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia is home to thousands of people of Caribbean descent;

WHEREAS, the first celebration of Caribbean-American month was conceived in 1996 by residents of Ward 4 of the District of Columbia, mainly, Doreen Thompson, Esq., with the significant contribution of Dr. Basil Buchanan, a resident of Ward 1;

WHEREAS, Ward 4 has been the historical base for the Caribbean community, and 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;

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, Caribbean Americans played an active role in the civil rights movement and other social and political causes, and have continued to contribute to the government, military, arts, business, music, sports and science and technology in the District of Columbia and the United States;

WHEREAS, in 2001, Mayor Anthony Williams first proclaimed June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month in the District of Columbia;

WHEREAS, in June 2005, the official campaign to nationally recognize the contributions of Caribbean people was jumpstarted through the efforts of Jamila Thompson, a District resident, and Dr. Claire A. Nelson, Founder of the Institute of Caribbean Studies, a District of Columbia nonprofit;

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WHEREAS, this effort lead to the House of Representatives unanimous adoption of H. Con. Res. 71, sponsored by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-DCA), recognizing the significance of Caribbean people and their descendants in the history and culture of the United States;

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush issued the first Presidential proclamation declaring June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month on June 5, 2006;

WHEREAS, June of 2021 is the 20th Anniversary of celebrating Caribbean-American Heritage Month in the District of Columbia;

WHEREAS, in 2021, we celebrate the resilience of the Caribbean-American hospitality industry with the recognition of June as Caribbean Cuisine Month and June 6-12 as National Caribbean-American Restaurant Week; and

WHEREAS, Caribbean-American Heritage Month is an opportunity to honor and celebrate the history, culture, and essential role of Caribbean Americans in the District of Columbia and across the United States.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Caribbean-American Heritage Month Ceremonial Recognition Resolution of 2021”.

Sec. 2. The Council recognizes the outstanding contributions and valued accomplishments of the Caribbean-American community in the District of Columbia and the United States of America, recognizes District residents of Caribbean heritage on the occasion of National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, and declares June 2021 as “Caribbean-American Heritage Month” in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.