

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

24-71

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

July 13, 2021

To recognize and honor Maria S. Gomez for her many years of leadership and service to the District of Columbia and to the greater D.C. metropolitan region.

WHEREAS, Maria S. Gomez was born in Colombia and immigrated to the United States with her mother at the age of 13;

WHEREAS, Ms. Gomez attended D.C. Public Schools;

WHEREAS, Ms. Gomez obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Georgetown University and a Master's in Public Health from the University of California at Berkeley;

WHEREAS, during her career Ms. Gomez has worked at the D.C. Department of Health, at the Red Cross, and at the Visiting Nurses Association;

WHEREAS, in 1988, Ms. Gomez founded Mary's Center with a group of healthcare advocates and the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, inspired to help Latina women who had fled war and poverty in Central America and who also had unmet needs for maternal healthcare;

WHEREAS, Ms. Gomez is the president and CEO of Mary's Center, a community health center providing integrated health care, educational, and social services, embracing people from all communities including Latina women living in Ward 1;

WHEREAS, Mary's Center originally operated out of a small basement clinic on Columbia Road NW, before moving to its current headquarters at 2333 Ontario Road NW;

WHEREAS, under Ms. Gomez's leadership, Mary's Center has grown from an initial budget of \$250,000 serving 200 participants per year, to an annual budget of \$61 million providing more than 30 services to over 60,000 participants across 5 medical clinics, 2 senior wellness centers, and a program office located in the District and Maryland;

WHEREAS, through its social change model and integrated approach to individualized services, Mary's Center offers medical, dental, and behavioral health services along with social services and family literacy services, based on its belief that healthcare is a basic human right and the foundation on which stronger communities are built;

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WHEREAS, Ms. Gomez has received countless awards for her exemplary service, including the 2012 Presidential Citizens Medal presented by President Barack Obama, the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs' Community Service Award in 2019, and Catholic University's President's Medal for Distinguished Community Services in 1993;

WHEREAS, Ms. Gomez contributes to the success of other nonprofit organizations, including through her service as a board member for the DC Primary Care Association, the Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County, and the Washington Area Women's Foundation;

WHEREAS, Mary's Center will be joined by its many supporters across the metropolitan region in celebrating Ms. Gomez on her final year as its leader, and Mary's Center will continue to honor her legacy through service to people and communities;

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Maria Gomez Ceremonial Resolution of 2021."

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and honors Maria S. Gomez for over 30 years of leadership and service benefitting patients and energizing public health professionals.

Sec 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.