

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 56th Legislature (2017)

3 HOUSE

4 RESOLUTION 1016

By: Stone

7 AS INTRODUCED

8 A Resolution declaring May 1, 2017, to be Hispanic
9 Cultural Day in Oklahoma in recognition of the
10 heritage and culture of Hispanics and the immense
11 contributions of Hispanics to the State of Oklahoma.

12 WHEREAS the State of Oklahoma celebrates Hispanic Cultural Day
13 on May 1, 2017; and

14 WHEREAS, Hispanics or Latinos are those people who identify
15 their origin as heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of
16 birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before
17 their arrival in the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, the Hispanic countries are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile,
19 Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El
20 Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay,
21 Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela; and

22 WHEREAS, Hispanics in Oklahoma in the twenty-first century trace
23 their roots to all nineteen Spanish-speaking Latin American nations
24

1 and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Until the 1960s Hispanics in
2 Oklahoma were almost exclusively of Mexican descent; and

3 WHEREAS, beginning in the 1960s the non-Mexican Hispanic
4 population of Oklahoma also significantly grew. Puerto Ricans, who
5 comprise the second largest Hispanic group in Oklahoma, usually come
6 to the state as members of the armed forces or civilian employees at
7 such places as Fort Sill, Altus Air Force Base, Tinker Air Force
8 Base and Vance Air Force Base and have remained after completing
9 their enlistment period or upon retirement; and

10 WHEREAS, Oklahomans of Cuban ancestry have comprised the third
11 largest Hispanic group in the state, but their number remains
12 relatively small. In 2000 Oklahomans of Cuban descent totaled
13 approximately 1700, or 1 percent of the Hispanic population, and
14 they typically hold managerial, professional, military, or business
15 positions; and

16 WHEREAS, people who trace their ancestry to the Spanish-speaking
17 nations of Central and South America are a rapidly growing segment
18 of Oklahoma's Hispanic population. Guatemalans, Hondurans,
19 Salvadorans, Colombians, Peruvians, and Venezuelans constitute the
20 largest contingents of Central and South American newcomers and live
21 predominantly in the Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Lawton areas; and

22 WHEREAS, organizations such as Oklahoma City's Latino
23 Development Agency and Legal Aid of Western Oklahoma facilitated the
24 adjustment of Hispanic immigrants. Civic associations such as the

1 League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), American G.I.
2 Forum, Oklahoma Association of Hispanic Professionals and Hispanic
3 Chamber of Commerce all voice Hispanic concerns. Spanish-language
4 newspapers in major urban areas discuss community affairs and enable
5 businesses and public agencies to reach more effectively a growing
6 Spanish-speaking clientele. Spanish-language radio stations across
7 the state offer news programs, public announcements, and popular
8 music; and

9 WHEREAS, the maintenance of ethnic identity and promotion of
10 cultural pride is important to Oklahoma Hispanics. For more than a
11 century Mexicans have commemorated national patriotic events such as
12 the Cinco de Mayo and 16 de September (Mexico's Independence Day).
13 In 1991 Oklahoma officially established September 15 to October 15
14 as "Hispanic Month." Many Hispanics continue to mark the "Dia de la
15 Raza" (Columbus Day), and Colombians, Peruvians, Panamanians, and
16 others celebrate their mother country's achievement of independence;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, groups such as the Hispanic Heritage Association in
19 Oklahoma City and the Hispanic American Foundation of Tulsa are
20 devoted to the maintenance of traditional customs, dances, and
21 music; and

22 WHEREAS, from 2010 to 2015, the number of Hispanics living in
23 the state doubled to 400,000. Hispanics made up ten percent of
24 Oklahoma's 3.9 million people. Recent demographic trends suggest

1 that they will play an increasingly important role in Oklahoma's
2 future; and

3 WHEREAS, there are more than 10,000 Hispanic-owned businesses in
4 Oklahoma. The buying power of Oklahoma Hispanics has reached \$7.8
5 billion.

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
7 OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 56TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

8 THAT all Oklahomans celebrate the heritage and culture of
9 Hispanics in Oklahoma and recognize the immense contributions of
10 Hispanics to this state.

11 THAT May 1, 2017, is hereby declared to be Hispanic Cultural Day
12 in Oklahoma.

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14 56-1-7712 SD 04/24/17

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