

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH

MAY 7, 2024

Proclaiming May as Haitian Heritage Month in Los Angeles County

In 1998, "Haitian Heritage Month" was first celebrated in the United States in Boston, Massachusetts, to celebrate the rich culture, history, and contributions of the Haitian community towards every aspect of American life. From contributions to art, music, and history, Haitian heritage is an indispensable part of the nation's and Los Angeles County's cultural tapestry.

The month-long celebration of Haitian heritage arose from "Haitian Flag Day", celebrated on May 18th of each year since 1803, which signifies the day Haiti first attained independence and established the first Black republic in the world.

Since 1790, Haitians have immigrated to the United States, playing a pivotal role in advancing the nation's development and economic growth. The Haitian community's contributions span various domains, from healthcare, law, and education to leaving an indelible mark in the visual and performing arts in languages such as Spanish, Haitian Creole, and French, all of which add to the community's rich cultural legacy and enhances the fabric of American society.

As we celebrate Haitian Heritage Month, we also must call attention to the multitude of crises facing Haiti, including political instability, and both a devastating

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earthquake and significant impacts from major tropical storm Grace in 2021. During this Haitian Heritage Month, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors stands strong in supporting Haitian immigrants and their families who come to Los Angeles, providing them the services and support they need to thrive and contribute to making our community a better place for all.

For the thousands of Haitians who have sought out a better life in Los Angeles County, this month serves to celebrate their connection to their heritage and history. Haitian Americans have played an integral role in our local civic, entrepreneurial, and artistic landscapes. It is imperative that we afford broader recognition and visibility to the Haitian American community, both within Los Angeles County and across the nation.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Proclaim May of each year as Haitian Heritage Month in Los Angeles County beginning in 2024.
2. Reaffirm its commitment to providing the necessary resources and services to support Haitian immigrants who arrive to Los Angeles County.
3. Encourage communities across Los Angeles County to learn more about and celebrate the history, legacy, and contributions of the Haitian community.

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