
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 176 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY DiSANTO, STEFANO, ROBINSON, CAPPELLETTI,
TARTAGLIONE, PHILLIPS-HILL, KANE, SANTARSIERO, MARTIN,
FONTANA, COMMITTA AND COSTA, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of October 2023 as "Italian-American
2 Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Explorer Christopher Columbus, the son of a wool
4 merchant, was born in Genoa, Italy, around 1451; and

5 WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus was determined to find a
6 quicker route west from Europe to Asia and embarked on what
7 would become four voyages across the Atlantic Ocean starting in
8 1492; and

9 WHEREAS, During his initial voyage, Christopher Columbus
10 landed upon an island in the Bahamas, and his journey became a
11 catalyst for centuries of exploration of the Americas; and

12 WHEREAS, Columbus set into motion the widespread transfer of
13 people, plants, animals and cultures between the Old and New
14 Worlds; and

15 WHEREAS, While Italian adventurers have always been a part of
16 American history, it was not until the 1820s that Italian
17 immigrants began moving to the United States in sizable numbers;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, A feudal society, high unemployment and oppressive
3 taxes coupled with natural disasters, disease, poverty and
4 famine, gave many reasons for Italians to look for freedom and
5 opportunities abroad; and

6 WHEREAS, While educated Italian professionals also emigrated,
7 many Italian immigrants arrived relatively unskilled, but soon
8 helped fuel a booming industrial economy by providing labor for
9 American factories and mines and helping to build roads, dams,
10 tunnels and other infrastructure; and

11 WHEREAS, As Italian Americans began settling in the country's
12 major cities, they faced religious and ethnic discrimination
13 which occasionally led to brutal violence; and

14 WHEREAS, For this reason, Italian Americans started
15 celebrating the life and accomplishments of Christopher Columbus
16 as a way for residents of Italian descent to be accepted by
17 their new homeland; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed
19 Columbus Day as a national holiday; and

20 WHEREAS, We credit Christopher Columbus with Italian
21 immigration to the New World and what is now Pennsylvania; and

22 WHEREAS, Currently, there are more than 16 million Americans
23 of Italian heritage in the United States and more than 1.4
24 million Americans of Italian heritage residing in Pennsylvania;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, In 1905, the Order Sons of Italy in America was
27 formed, with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania to follow in 1913;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, Their successors, the State Lodge of Pennsylvania,
30 Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America and the Grand Lodge

1 of Pennsylvania Sons and Daughters of Italy, continue to
2 preserve Italian-American traditions, history and culture and
3 combat discrimination while upholding the positive image of
4 Italian heritage; therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the month of October 2023
6 as "Italian-American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania and
7 acknowledge the important role of early immigrants in our
8 Commonwealth's history.