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National Hispanic Heritage Week, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During National Hispanic Heritage Week, all Americans can recognize, honor, and celebrate the rich and diverse contributions Hispanic Americans have made to our land ever since the exploration and settlement of the Western Hemisphere.

People of Hispanic culture have been present in the Americas from early times and have exerted much influence on the development of the United States. Hispanic explorers helped open the New World, discover its resources, and found its new nations, including parts of our own. Explorers such as Coronado in the 16th century traveled throughout the present-day United States, and Spaniards settled in St. Augustine, Florida, long before Jamestown was founded. The founding of missions and presidios in California was simultaneous with the American Revolution; and when the new United States had won, thanks in part to Spanish help, Te Deum masses of thanksgiving were celebrated in those missions, just as throughout all Spanish colonies. In the 19th century, the vision of liberty inspired countless brave Latin Americans to fight for independence for their countries. Today, Hispanics carry on the dream of freedom throughout the hemisphere, and democracy is enjoying a broad resurgence.

The Spanish names bestowed on so many of our cities, towns, States, rivers, mountains, and lakes—Los Angeles, Sacramento, Guadalupe, Colorado, Sierra Nevada, for instance—remind us daily that the values of Hispanic Americans, such as devotion to church, family, work, and community, helped settle our frontiers and build our future. Hispanic Americans have served and sacrificed time and again in the Armed Forces to keep our Nation free. Hispanic cultural heritage is a constant source of enrichment for our country, and Hispanic Americans are a source of close ties to the nations of Central and South America.

America's Hispanic heritage is an indelible and invaluable part of our history and a vital part of the creative forces that are shaping our future.

In recognition of the outstanding achievements of Hispanic Americans, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved September 17, 1968 (Public Law 90-498), has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating the week including September 15 and 16 as National Hispanic Heritage Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning September 13, 1987, as National Hispanic Heritage Week, in recognition of the Hispanic individuals, families, and communities who enrich our national life. I call upon the people of the United States, especially educators, to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 11th day of Sept., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

Ronald Reagan