
From: Jacqueline DeCola <decoladesign@live.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 3:06 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Testimony

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Good afternoon,

October is Italian American Heritage Month and I am in favor of Italian Heritage Day in New Haven. I believe it is important to remove Columbus as the pillar to honor our Italian heritage.

However, I do still stand with the marginalized indigenous people and hope that our Italian American community, along with the City of New Haven can come together to honor them during the month of November which is Indian Heritage Month!

Thank you,
Jacqueline DeCola

Sent from my iPhone

A cartoon from 1912 (see Figure 13.2) portrayed "a wop" as a shoe polisher who wore a corduroy suit with a red bandana and carrying terms and the demeaning images proved remarkably long lasting. As is so often the case, derision was accompanied by fear: eve

DISCRIMINATION, PREJUDICE AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HISTORY



A WOP

A pound of spaghett' and a red-a bandan'
A stilet' and a corduroy suit;
Add garlic wat make for him stronga da
mus'
And a talent for black-a da boot!

SALVATORE J. LAGUMINA



Figure 13.1 "The Organ-Grinder." A drawing by Charles Stanley Reinhart (New York Public Library, 1873), 34. Photo: New York Public Library.

objectionable. Americans read a steady flow of outrageous accounts of innocent travelers were regularly assaulted on lonely Italian roads. In the mass Italian emigration there were patronizing depictions of Italian men and women, and the resulting stereotypes. A campaign against organ grinders in New York City from the 1850s, and almost all of them Italian, led to an ordinance that made them a public nuisance.³

These depictions initiated in American popular culture a stream of stereotypes. There was, for instance, a hit song in 1908 called "Wop, Wop, Wop." Written by famed songwriter James Brockman, it contained verses:

* When first I came to dees-a coun-ti-ree,
All people call me "dago man";
And you can bet dot was no fun to me,
Den dey change and call me Guinie.
Twice as bad a name dey gimmie. . . .
Dey call me a nick-name,
Dey shout-a "Toney,
You're a phoney,
Look-a like-a Macaroni!"
Wop! Wop! Wop!⁴

A.

Name Frances A. Calzetta

Date: July 22,2020

Address:Near Lifetime resident of New Haven CT. 70+ years at 239 Forbes Avenue. Retired to Branford a few short years ago. Calzetta and Parente (Maternal)Family roots are deep in New Haven CT. (Since 1902).

The United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs conducted a 12 year study of the World's Indigenous People. In 1994, 26 years ago, the General Assembly of the United Nations declared AUGUST 9th of every year to be Indigenous People Day. Each year Celebratory Events are held at UN Headquarters in New York City and worldwide. This is an unprecedented action by the UN.

The Knights of Columbus, at the 2019 spring hearing on name change , presented a viable plan for the Celebration of Indigenous People Day. This would include all people of New Haven and surrounding towns and anyone else wishing to celebrate .

For 26 years those supporting Indigenous People Day have

deliberately chosen to ignore the UN Declaration and the K of C initiative. This is clear evidence that are not interested in Celebrating IPD. Instead , they choose to deliberately stoke the flames of hate, against Columbus, and attack with feral savagery not only Columbus but the Italian Americans and the Catholic religion.(St Joseph Church recently vandalized as well as 10 other Catholic Churches across the nation).

Civilized conversation and an honest effort to address the Columbus issue has not even been tried. The promulgation of mis-information , media bias and ignorance, and threats (real and implied) to statues, property and persons have been allowed to thrive . The result is the current civil unrest.

The demographics of the City of New Haven do not support changing the Columbus Date to IPD. 1% or fewer IP are in this City. Those who choose to Celebrate IPD can and should adhere to the United Nations Documents on such; August 9. We will happily celebrate with you!!!!

I support Alderman Sal DeCola's Bill to change Columbus

Day to Italian Heritage Day. We have much to be proud of.

The Italian American contribution to the development of the City of New Haven is vast. Italians have been migrating to NH in droves since circa 1880. Italian American history and culture make this ethnic group essential to the American experience. We are a major identifiable ethnic group.

Through the immigrants sweat and hardship, toil and tears, New Haven thrived. They worked in the factories, the sweatshops, the small businesses, the construction, the Police and Fire departments and the schools and hospitals. IA's achieved success through their intelligence, cohesive family life, bonded neighborhoods, and an adherence to a work ethic that makes the much ballyhooed work ethic of the Protestants look like child's play.

The first and succeeding generations educated their children and parents insisted they do well in school. IA's realized EDUCATION was the key to the American Dream. AND succeed we did: in all fields whether the professions, the trades or the ordinary workers we rose to

the challenge.

Italians came to this country(City of New Haven and Environs) with a different background and culture from the prevailing Anglo-Saxon model. Italians had a different and contrasting value system, regarding religion, language, cuisine, customs and psychology/philosophy. The prejudice and bias experienced was not only severe but lasted to this into the 2nd 3rd and yes even 4th generations. As late as the 1990's while at a Yale football game, seated on the 50 yard line, an Anglo-Saxon woman sitting behind me disparages the Italian star of the football team by snidely commenting "There's an awful lot of spaghetti on that field." My angry look back at her caused her to shrink down and her hubby looked down the row to see what she had so offensively uttered. Said football player now a prominent M.D. in NH/GNH.

DISCRIMINATION against my own family. Dad came here in 1913 /age 18 with a 7th grade education and little English. Initially on a work crew the Anglo Boss yelled at the men, "MOVE GUINEA WOPS". My dad stood up and

yelled back to him. "You no call me GUINEA WOP. My name is Carminu.". Later dad was instrumental in bringing the union CIO to the company he worked for due to long hours and low pay.

Grandfather Flaviano^{Parents}: Migrated 1902/age 23 with wife and 1 2 year old daughter. He had a small farm but also worked at Sperry and Barnes. The non Italians derided him as a "PIG STICKER" . Of course they ate the food produced. This 2 year old daughter died a aage 29 from an infection form the factory she worked in. No antibodies in thse days and certainly no death benefits. Left my dad with 3 children age 9,6,5. Married my Mom(1st wife sister) a year later and with help of Aunt Mary(Chairlady of ILGWU at her sweatshop) and Grammy Rosa we survived. I came along later.

My Honors Student sister and accomplished cousin both discriminated against by the Southern New England Telephone Company. Honor student was offered the lowest job at the company, (Anglo Saxons with same were put on advancement track). The cousin was told to "Go home and

dust". (There are more but this makes the point.)

Italians are no strangers to bias and discrimination. Italian Americans everywhere can tell you similar accounts of the Italian Experience of the cruelty and yes, ignorance on the abusers part. In 1891, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge called for immigration restrictions of the Southern Italians(that is primarily us)as he viewed us as not possessing the attractive and desirable virtues of being serious and industrious! He could not have been more wrong.

Continuing the bias and discrimination in 1924 the Congress of the United States did pass legislation restricting the quota from Southern Europe. Motivation: Jealousy of our competitiveness and successes, indifference, false claims in media of the day! President Lyndon Johnson signed the change to more open immigration by the Hart- Cellar Act of 1965.

The 2nd Monday of October as Italian Heritage Day will not only Celebrate the accomplishments of the Italians Americans both local and national figures, but will celebrate the men and women of Italy fro antiquity to the

present. We will celebrate the significance of the contribution that Italy itself has made to the world.

* Just ONE Contemporary Model of the magnificent contribution to the world and to the future Italian Americans have made.

NASA Astronaut Wally Schirra, 1 of the original 7 astronauts chosen for Project Mercury the United States First effort to put human beings in space.

Rocco Petrone. Pioneer of the American Space Program.

NASA Director of Launch Operations . He personally supervised the Apollo II Mission which landed a man on the moon. He then became Director of AppoloII NASA Mission..

Michael Massimino / MIT wrote the Astronaut book
SPACEMAN: AN ASTRONAUTS UNLIKELY JOURNEY
TO UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE.

I strongly support the 2nd Monday of October as Italian Heritage Day !

Francesca Calzotta

CITY SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY COMMITTEE

The resolution before your committee- Declaring the Second Monday in October as “Italian Heritage Day” deserves your acceptance and enthusiastic support.

My name is Paul J. Criscuolo, a New Haven native and the President of the Saint Catello Society; a religious society organized on November 3rd, 1901, here in New Haven honoring Saint Catello, an Italian Bishop and the Patron Saint of the City of Castellammare di Stabia, Italy. Castellammare is a city on the Bay of Naples that was prosperous business center since early Roman Empire days and, along with Pompeii and Herculaneum, was buried in the most famous Vesuvius eruption of August 24, 79 AD.

The Saint Catello Society was founded by immigrants to New Haven from Castellammare and prospers to this day. With its home base in New Haven, the Society has members across the region and from as far away as California, Florida, Costa Rica and even Italy. Our members have achieved great success in many fields of endeavor. From doctors, judges, lawyers, civil servants, politicians, contractors, factory workers, farmers and common laborers, our members have helped build the City of New Haven and the surrounding communities into what they are today. Our membership has been growing over the last number of years to over 200 and we have strived to reach our young people, while showing them the significance of our traditions, history and heritage. This is as important today as it was in 1901.

My Great Grandfather, my Grandfather, my Dad were all members of the Saint Catello Society. Now my Grandchildren have become memmmbers, making five generations in my family and this is mirrored throughout our membership. From the Society's early days when the majority of its members occupied the neighborhoods of Jocelyn Square, Hamilton, East and Wallace streets all the way to Wooster Street and Wooster Square; the Society has demonstrated the resolve and farsightedness of its members. Their family, their Church, their traditions and heritage were the most important parts of their lives. These same values are even more prevalent today. It is still so very important for us to remember our ancestors, traditions and heritage. We make for a stronger today, by recognizing and learning from our most precious past.

Thank you the Board of Alders and this Committee for their consideration of this important legislation.

**Paul J. Criscuolo
110 Damascus Road
Branford, CT 06405**

August 3, 2020

To the Members of the Cultural Affairs Commission, City of New Haven,

I write to you in strong support of recognizing the second Monday in October as Italian Heritage Day. For as long as I could remember, what was known as Columbus Day was a day Italian Americans celebrated our proud heritage through dinners, parades, musical and other cultural events that brought family and friends and the community together. Many of these events happened in Wooster Square Park during and at the conclusion of the annual parade. As a student at St. Michael Catholic School, I marched in the parade every year and even danced the Tarantella with my classmates on a stage set in the park with the statue as a backdrop. I vividly remember everyone, not just Italians, wearing green, white and red hats, clothes and waving Italian flags enjoying the music, food and most importantly the friendships. As I grew older and joined my family in operating Iovanne Funeral Home, Inc. in Wooster Square, I've had the privilege to sit and listen to many people, all of whom told a similar story. They came to America from Italy with their parents and settled in New Haven with the hopes and dreams of a better life. They worked hard, provided for their families and were deep in their faith. Families, some with 8 or more children, lived in cold-water flats, slept two or three to a bed, handed down their clothes to younger siblings and ate their meals in shifts. They played outside with holes in their shoes. They didn't know they were poor because they were happy, and they were proud! Listening to their stories made me proud to be Italian.

The commission will hear many stories just like this. Stories of hard work that led to success, family helping families and proud traditions passed on through the years. We are not asking for anything other than what we have been celebrating for generations. The second Monday of October has been and should continue to be a day for all to celebrate Italian Heritage.

Respectfully,

William G. Iovanne

Vanessa Pomarico-Denino, EdD, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP
286 Cook Hill Road
Wallingford, CT 06492
vpdenino@gmail.com

July 28, 2020

Dear Board of Alders, City of New Haven:

I am writing in regards to the resolution before the Board of Alders to change the second Monday in October to Italian Heritage Day and the month of October to Italian Heritage Month.

As an Italian-American, I take great pride in my heritage. My family came from Amalfi, Italy through Ellis Island to settle in New Haven. My dad grew up on St. John Street and my mom grew up on Adeline Street. Our extended family all had businesses in the Wooster Square area throughout much of my childhood and my dad had a furniture store on Grand Avenue right up until the late 1980's when he retired. Every year, our family would attend the Feasts, married in the New Haven churches and frequented the restaurants and businesses in New Haven. As an adult, I continue to attend these events as well as the Cherry Blossom Festival and became a member of the St. Andrew's Ladies Society several years ago. My great-aunt was one of the founding members of the Ladies Society. These traditions are what continue to connect me to my heritage and it is important to me to keep these connections to my family and ancestors.

The purpose of this resolution is to protect the presence and importance of Italian heritage and ensure that our legacy remains alive and vibrant. I implore you to consider the importance and significance that Italian Heritage Day and Italian Heritage month will have on the preservation of the customs and birthright that we work so hard to maintain. I feel it is imperative to allow the Italian community recognition of our heritage.

I am asking for your support of this resolution that will allow Italian-Americans the ability to celebrate all that our families sacrificed to come to this country for a better life. To deny us the ability to celebrate our birthright is to deny our very existence. It is only through sharing of traditions with the newer generations that keeps our rich history and customs alive.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Pomarico, EdD, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP

Vanessa Pomarico-Denino, EdD, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP

From: MaryEllen <maryellenvollano@att.net>
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2020 9:42 AM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

Please be cautious

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi,

I would like to see in New Haven the second Monday in October as Italian Heritage Day!

Also, what will be done about Christopher Columbus statue?

Please add these questions to your agenda and include me in virtual meeting.

Thanks

MaryEllen Vollano

Sent from my Verizon Motorola Smartphone

From: Louise Scrivani <louisescrivani@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 3:45 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject:

Please be cautious

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I am 100% in favor of the resolution before the Board of Alders to change the 2nd Monday in October to Italian Heritage Day and that October be Italian Heritage Month.
Thank you.
Louise Scrivani

From: MADELINE C DART <mcdart517@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2020 11:59 AM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Columbus Day

Please be cautious

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I am in favor of changing the day to Italian Heritage day,
Please disregard my first e-mail. I misunderstood the e-mail I received. I am totally Italian & all 4 of my grandparents came over from Italy during difficult times.

Thank you, Madeline Cavaiuolo Dart

From: tsantoro2 <tsantoro2@cox.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 11:04 AM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Cc: Dominic Schioppo Jr. <dschioppo@yahoo.com>
Subject: Do Not Change Columbus Day

Please be cautious

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Since when do we make decisions based on succumbing to a violent mob or deceit by politicians? We shouldn't negotiate a thing until the statue is returned. Italian Americans make up almost 30% of the state of Connecticut and we are very angry. See you in November. Please read below.

On Tuesday, July 28, 2020, 10:00:57 PM EDT, tsantoro2 <tsantoro2@cox.net> wrote:

It is time to make this a Pyrrhic victory for those who cowardly succumbed to the violent mob.

In a free country, we are being told who we can honor as part of our heritage.

We are being told to honor people whose own ancestors slaughtered, enslaved, cannibalized, scalped, waged war, sold and tortured their own people for 17000 years. That is, since they immigrated. Yet the criteria applied to Columbus does not apply to them.

I welcome the argument about Columbus ' contribution to the world in spite of his faults. In the light of history, he is as worthy of admiration as any other historical figures who also carried the faults of their generation.

The real argument is that the people whom we elected to protect us and represent us did not. They cowardly failed to do their job. They lied to us, tricked us, violated our civil rights, allowed violence against us and our monuments.

Now we are being asked to accept political reality. And I understand the situation. But we need to redefine the political circumstances. Neither Governor, Senators, Congressmen, Congresswomen, Mayors, nor other representatives, with few exceptions, came to our aid. They did not fulfill the basic requirements of democratic government. Therefore, they must be fired.

Maybe we can have a show of unity on Columbus day weekend, maybe not. If we do, you can bet it will not be only supported by Italian Americans. They country has had enough also. If not, then we can promote an informal phone or email campaign to throw all these politicians out of office this November election. That is our responsibility.

No one club or organization should be asked to stand out on this. This is about us as individuals. Our Italian American ancestors came to the aid of our country when our ideals were threatened and many gave their lives as a result. Now we are being asked to do come to the aid of our country and its ideals with a much smaller sacrifice.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: Eileen Waldman <e9823@att.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 2, 2020 11:47 AM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

Please be cautious

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in support for changing Columbus Day to Italian Heritage Day. Especially in New Haven, Italian immigrants embraced and continue to embrace American culture and ideals. As the granddaughter of Italian immigrants I proudly call to mind my maternal grandparents who became property owners and business owners. My grandfather prior to opening up a small cafe on Davenport Ave was one of the masons who worked on the arch of the Peabody Museum. My paternal grandmother worked for May Coat company as a seamstress for many years and owned and maintained a house on Stevens Street in New Haven and continued to do so once widowed. My grandparents were strong hardworking people who were proud of their heritage while taking ownership of their new American home with it's many opportunities. Never expecting anything they didn't work for, they were industrious, loyal and contributing members of the USA. I believe they too should be honored. The worthy Indigenous People of the U.S. have been honored with their contributions with their own day and I feel so should my ancestors. Thank you, Eileen Caestro Waldman

From: Michele Schioppo <mschioppo@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 8:44 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

Please be cautious

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To whom it may concern,

Since you decided to target the Italians and no longer recognize Columbus Day, I am requesting because at this point there is no other recourse, to recognize Italian Heritage Day. If this is not granted, I would take this as racist against the Italians and in order to be fair then the following days which are just a few I've listed

should no longer be recognized as they are specific to a group of people, St Patricks Day, Valentines Day, Martin Luther King Day.

Michele Ogan-Schioppo

From: Debra Johnson <TmstrDeb@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 10:57 AM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

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To whom it may concern,

Please be advised that I am in support of establishing Italian Heritage Day as an alternative to Columbus Day. As a Proud Member of The American Italian Women of Greater New Haven, a civic organization, we support a day in which to celebrate our heritage.

As you know, the United Nations designated August 9th as international Indigenous People Day to celebrate all the wonderful indigenous cultures around the world. We would like to celebrate ours as well.

I write in support of establishing Italian Heritage Day.

Thank you very much.

Debra A Johnson
246 Peck Ave
West Haven, CT. 06516

Sent from my iPad

Great opportunities to help others seldom come,
but small ones surround us everyday -
Sally Koch

From: Ann Marie Fiondella <annmarie31749@comcast.net>

Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 8:30 PM

To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>

Subject: Italian Heritage Day

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To The Committee: I wish to express my view that Italian Heritage Month is a wonderful tribute to those who emigrated to the USA and settled in New Haven's Wooster Square. These hard working people built New Haven's Wooster Square and deserve to be recognized for bringing our (my) heritage to New Haven. I was born on Chestnut St in 1949, before Redevelopment changed the landscape, so from my earliest years I fully remember the sacrifices my grandparents made and the pride they instilled in me. My mother was born on Chestnut St., and she and my dad were married in St. Michael Church which overlooks the Green. I received my sacraments from St. Michael's as well. I always took pride and still do, in my Italian Heritage. Sincerely, Ann Marie Fiondella, St. Andrew Ladies Society.....

From: Peter Desio <pjdesio@snet.net>
Sent: Monday, August 3, 2020 9:23 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Italian Heritage Day

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Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Desio <PJDESIO@SNET.NET>
Date: August 3, 2020 at 3:44:31 PM EDT
To: publictestimony@newhavenct.gov
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

Dear Board of Alders I support having Italian Heritage Day on the second Monday in October in honor of Italian contribution made in this area. Thank you for your consideration.

Peter Desio
529 Emerson Drive
Branford, CT
Sent from my iPhone

From: Gerard DeNegre <gdenegre@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 4, 2020 12:49 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

Please be cautious

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As a 4th generation Italian-American from NEW HAVEN I am absolutely outraged at the attack on our people in the political climate. Our ancestors have earned the right to be honored for all the contributions they have made to the city and count of New Haven. We must have an Italian Heritage Day.

Gerard DeNegre
Office: 203.453.4629
Mobile: 203.430.1448

From: David DeMartino <zeekct@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 6:06 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian heritage day

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please consider changing the name of Columbus day to Italian Heritage Day.

Thank you
David DeMartino

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Carmela Blakeman <carmelablakeman@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 3:59 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Cc: Carmela Blakeman <carmelablakeman@gmail.com>
Subject: Italian Heritage Day

Please be cautious

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To the Board of Alder,

In light of the lack of support for the Christopher Columbus Statue, I am expressing my support on the Italian Day, to be celebrated on the 2nd Monday of October. I also support October as being designated as Italian Heritage Month.

I do want to make something clear that in doing so you should include a statement agreeing to the change, but that it does not mean that we are agreeing to the New Haven Alders version of history.

Thank you,

Carmel Amore Blakeman

Sent from my iPhone

From: JAN RUSSO <ruggerlok5@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 10:39 AM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Italian Heritage

Please be cautious

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello All,

Was very sad to hear the Italian heritage of New Haven is disappearing. My parents and grandparents helped build New Haven when they immigrated here. We ate lived and breathed New Haven. Even though I myself did not live in New Haven as a child and into adulthood- I dine, shop and entertain in New Haven. It is my home town City of which I have always supported. I worked in New Haven and still volunteer in New Haven. It is my heritage. Why would you strip New Haven of anything Italian? Our beloved statue and now Columbus day?.

How can I support a city that denounces my heritage? My family was discriminated against for being Italian when they arrived here- could only live in a certain section, could only get jobs at certain places but we forged onward. Now all the hard work , way of life and all things Italian that helped build New Haven are disappearing? Have you not read the books seen movies, news articles of the Italian immigrants and what they were about in settling New haven and it surrounding towns? does all that mean nothing?

if you continue on this path of removing my heritage and the true history of New Haven- Im done supporting New Haven. No more volunteering, no more donations, i'll take my shopping and dinning elsewhere. Sounds childish but removing my heritage and what my parents, cousins, aunts uncles worked so hard to build is wrong- you are destroying my heritage without even an apology or acknowledgement of thanks to what all those did to build New Haven. Keep letting a smal vocal minority rule your city and you will be left with nothing.

Jan Russo

From: bill <blavelle@medicaire.net>
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 8:50 PM
To: Public Testimony <PublicTestimony@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: resolution

Please be cautious

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

William J. & Antoinette
75 Washington Ave unit 6-403
Hamden, CT. 06518
Phone 281-0009 Cell 203 710-9955

Italians have contributed a great deal to our city, State and country. Removing the statues of Christopher Columbus is an insult and hurtful to almost every Italian. This is not the way to bring people together, it causes more harm than good. It was said "A country without a past has no future", we should not try to remove history. I think it would go a long way if the Board of Alders would honor the Italians and try to give back some of what was taken away. I believe a way to do this is to approve the Resolution before the Board of Alders to change the 2nd Monday in October to Italian Heritage Day. The Resolution also asks that October be Italian Heritage Month.

Thank you for your consideration,

William J. LaVelle
Antoinette A. LaVelle

City Services and Environmental Policy Committee

I have been a lifetime resident of the City of New Haven living in the Goatville, Fair Haven and Annex/Morris Cove neighborhoods for over eight decades. I have had the opportunity to be involved in many various activities, among them, being active with Italian American groups and serving on the Columbus Day Committee for almost twenty years. The Resolution before your committee – Declaring the 2nd Monday in October as “Italian Heritage Day” is an appropriate one considering all the turmoil that has upset so many people in the Greater New Haven community with the removal of the Columbus Statue in Wooster Square.

Year after year, New Haven’s Italian-American community continues to celebrate the coming to America by their ancestors who settled in the Elm City. Like many others we (yes, I married into an Italian American Family) took part in the annual parade, walking tour of Wooster Square, cultural night, Wreath Ceremony and the annual Heritage Dinner.

Lets us turn back the hands of time to 1945 when William C. Celentano Sr. became the Mayor of New Haven after serving sixteen years on the Board of Aldermen. He was the first New Haven Mayor of Italian lineage. And then there was Bartholomew F. Guida who became Mayor in 1970 after serving twenty-two years on the Board of Aldermen.

Along came Biagio DiLieto, born in the Wooster Square neighborhood and one of thirteen children of Angelo and Olympia DiLieto. He became Chief of Police in New Haven in a career that spanned 29 years and became the Mayor in 1980 serving five terms. As we all know New Haven City Hall is named in his honor. In 1994 John DeStefano Jr. became the 49th Mayor of the City serving five terms. All four men, just like this committee served the city proudly.

To really understand the impact that Italian-Americans have had and continue to have on the City of New Haven and the many organizations celebrating their “Italian Heritage” I would like to provide each of you with a copy of a book researched and done by Author Laura A. Macaluso, PHD in 2017 entitled New Haven’s Columbus Day Parade and Monument. The many photos with description covers some the history of Italian Heritage in New Haven.

I want to thank each and every one of the Alders for your commitment and service to the residents of New Haven. Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter that can only lead to a happy ending with a positive result.

Edward F. Flynn Jr.
84 Townsend Terrace