



State Representative Rick Perales
House Bill 526 – Sponsor Testimony
State and Local Government Committee
December 8, 2020

Chairman Wiggam, Vice-chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity for to provide sponsor testimony on HB 526. This legislation would permanently recognize Hispanic & Latino Heritage Month in Ohio between the dates of September 15th through October 15th of each year. Although we have recognized this in the House before, via resolution, this would put official recognition in the Code.

Originally, National Hispanic Heritage Month was founded as National Hispanic Heritage Week. It was enacted in 1968 by President Lyndon Baines Johnson, to recognize the contributions of people of Hispanic and Latino/a origins to the United States, and to celebrate the cultures of Hispanics and Latinos/as as part of our shared American Experience.

¹ <https://www.army.mil/hispanics/history.html>

² <https://share.america.gov/hispanic-americans-serve-proudly-in-the-u-s-military/>

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan expanded National Hispanic Heritage Week to a month long celebration of the culture and work that people of Hispanic descent contribute to our state. Throughout the decades, Americans of Hispanic descent have proudly defended our country in wars and enriched the lives of all Ohioans through contributions to such fields as business, technology, science, education, religion, entertainment, politics, and the arts. According to the United States Army, approximately 20,000 Hispanic Americans served during Operation Desert Storm.¹ Additionally, 16% of the U.S. Army in 2019 identified as Hispanic Americans.²

In recognition of the contributions and military service from Hispanic Americans, I hope you will join us in recognizing National Hispanic Heritage Month here in Ohio. I welcome any questions committee members may have at this time.

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