



## Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners

# PROCLAMATION

### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

WHEREAS, National Hispanic Heritage Month, known as “Mes de la Herencia Hispana,” is celebrated nationwide from September 15th through October 15th each year.

WHEREAS, The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988, to cover the month at which it is celebrated today;

WHEREAS, September 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latino American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua and Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and 18, respectively;

WHEREAS, The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners wishes to honor and celebrate “Mes de la Herencia Hispana”, with the greater community to highlight the rich heritage, arts, histories, food, music and traditions of all 30+ Latino-American nations. While recognizing that these nations are not monogamous and this month celebrates, honors and pays tribute to all for their contributions to our County and our society;

WHEREAS, Latinos are individuals that are descendants from Latino American countries and may speak a variety of different languages; Hispanics are individuals that speak Spanish and are descendants from Spanish speaking countries, including Spain; Latinx is a gender neutral or non-binary term for people of Latino American descent, and we recognize the Latinx identity also encompasses people in Black/African, Asian, Indigenous, and Queer communities;

WHEREAS, Recognizing that Hispanics amount to an estimated 14,625 County residents, totaling 5.6% of the Kalamazoo County population of which 2,544 households (1.96%) of those County residents speak Spanish at home as their primary language. Understanding that Hispanics are extremely entrepreneurial and play a vital role in our economy and workforce with 50+ Hispanic-owned businesses in Kalamazoo County;

WHEREAS, The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners recognizes the significant contributions of all Hispanic County employees, community organizations and businesses, and numerous grassroots leaders and outreach groups that help increase cultural awareness, education, enrichment and community engagement with County residents. It is through their support and community involvement that Kalamazoo County has continued to become more culturally diverse and a Welcoming county for everyone; and

WHEREAS, The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners is committed to recognizing Hispanic/Latino and Latinx culture and heritage as an important part of the Kalamazoo County and its strong, inclusive community; now, therefore be it

