

# ACTION ITEM MEMO

Port of Tacoma Commission



Item No: 7A  
Meeting Date: 9/17/24

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**DATE:** September 3, 2024  
**TO:** Port of Tacoma Commission  
**FROM:** Eric Johnson, Executive Director  
Sponsor: Commissioner Dick Marzano  
Project Manager: Commissioner Marzano/Sean Eagan  
**SUBJECT:** National Hispanic Heritage Month Proclamation

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**A. ACTION REQUESTED**

Request approval of a Proclamation 2024-07-PT recognizing September 15, 2024, through October 15, 2024, as National Hispanic Heritage Month and calls upon the people of Pierce County to recognize the achievements of the Hispanic/Latino community and to celebrate the great diversity of the American people.

**Strategic Plan Initiative:** OS-5 and OS-6

**B. BACKGROUND**

The Port of Tacoma has adopted a Diversity and Inclusion Policy which declares that the Port respects and values the rich diversity of its employees, customers, contractors and stakeholders, that it is committed to a work environment that is inclusive and values diverse thought and expression in pursuit of the organization's mission, and is committed to provide a workplace environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

On September 17, 2020, the Port of Tacoma Commission adopted Resolution 2020-06-PT identifying diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values that the Port of Tacoma shall incorporate into its Strategic Plan and into its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives. The resolution adopted the following guiding principles as the basis for the Port of Tacoma's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives: undoing and understanding the history of racism, embracing differences, and developing leadership.

On April 16, 2021, the Port of Tacoma Commission approved a new strategic plan, which contained an organization goal of Organizational Success. Two of the identified strategies contained under this identified goal were:

- Integrating the values of diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as health and safety, into the Port's culture and decision-making framework (OS-5); and
- Fostering an organizational culture that attracts, develops and retains a diverse, high-performing, and engaged workforce (OS-6).

Hispanics in the Americas descended from Native Americans whose Indigenous civilizations developed and thrived thousands of years before Christopher Columbus reached the Americas. They joined with Europeans and Africans over five centuries to create a people unique to the Americas to reflect the joining of races and cultures. An estimated 63 million Hispanic Americans live in the United States.

Hispanics continue to enrich Pierce County and Washington state communities with the cultural, educational and political influences of their culture and can be seen and appreciated in all aspects of our life, from farmworker struggles for housing and equal wages, to incredible and gifted artists, professionals, vibrant businesses, music and community festivals. And estimated 12% of the Port district's residents are of Hispanic descent.

National Hispanic Heritage Month was created to showcase and highlight Hispanic contributions throughout our nation and as a reminder that Hispanics have been part of the history of this nation since the beginning. Mid-September was chosen because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. Also, Día de la Raza, which is October 12, falls within this 30-day period.

C. **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Proclamation states that the Port of Tacoma recognizes September 15, 2024, through October 15, 2024, as National Hispanic Heritage Month and calls upon the people of Pierce County to recognize the achievements of the Hispanic/Latino community and to celebrate the great diversity of the American people.

D. **TIMEFRAME/PROJECT SCHEDULE**

National Hispanic Heritage Month                      September 15-October 15, 2024

E. **ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS**

**Alternative 1**—Do nothing: Choosing not to recognize National Hispanic Heritage Month could send a signal that the Port does not recognize diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values and could be perceived as inconsistent with Strategic Plan Strategies OS-5 and OS-6.

**Alternative 2**—Adopt the Proclamation.