

Offered by City Councilor Julia Mejia, Councilor Brian Worrell and Councilor Ricardo Arroyo, Baker, Breadon, Coletta, Fernandes Anderson, Flaherty, Lara, Louijeune, Murphy and Flynn



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO EXPLORE THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF LATINO AND CARIBBEAN RESIDENTS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

WHEREAS, The Latino and Caribbean communities are an integral part of the City of Boston, comprising a significant portion of the population, 18.8% and 8.55 respectively, and contribute greatly to the city's economic, cultural, and social fabric; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's Latinos are concentrated in lower-paying occupational sectors, such as services and production jobs. Not only do these jobs pay low they often don't offer many benefits; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's older Latino population is experiencing significant health and economic needs and facing barriers to accessing benefits and social services. They have high risk of disability, chronic disease, and co-morbidities, *and*

WHEREAS, Only 15.7% of Caribbean immigrants and 18% of Latinos have attained a Bachelor's or higher, highlighting the need for increased access to higher education and job training programs to improve economic opportunities for these communities; *and*

WHEREAS, Latinos have the lowest homeownership rate in Boston, with only 16% owning homes compared to one third of Whites and half of Blacks, while Caribbean immigrants are more likely to rent their homes than the overall population, with 68% of Caribbeans renting in the metro area. Latino and Afro-Latino households are denied mortgages at significantly higher rates than White households. The highest rate of home loan denials is experienced by Afro-Latinos. Evictions in Boston are coming back up by nearly 75% from last year, and Latino have the highest rates of eviction in Boston area; *and*

WHEREAS, Approximately 23% of all Caribbean immigrants in Boston live in poverty, and Caribbean immigrants have higher rates of poverty than the rest of the population. Similarly, the median per capita income in 2015 for Latino residents was \$17,787; *and*

WHEREAS, Latino people in Massachusetts were more likely to report having utilized mental health services than White and Black people. Research has shown that Latino adolescents who are more recent immigrants, who have less parent and teacher support, who have different gender-role behavior expectations than their parents, and experience bullying or exclusion have greater likelihood of developing depression and/or anxiety. Parents of Latino children were nearly three times as likely to ever having been told their children had depression compared to the parents of non-Latino children; *and*

WHEREAS, Latino youth are at risk for joining gangs because of school-related problems, negative labeling, and school and neighborhood safety concerns. Latino youth are more likely to be incarcerated than white youth; *and*

WHEREAS, Latinx LGBTQ youth experience bullying and harassment at greater rates than other youth, with multi-racial Latinex youth (read: Afro-Latino) experiencing this at the highest rates: 34% of Latinx LGBTQ youth in MA experience bullying, 35% of Latinx youth in MA skipped school because they felt unsafe, 22% have been threatened or injured with a weapon at school, 62% have seriously considered suicide, and 37% have made a suicide attempt; *and*

WHEREAS, There is a need for a dedicated office within city government to address the needs and concerns of Latino and Caribbean communities in Boston to ensure their voices are heard and their interests are represented. Greater Boston Latino Network's research has documented that the representation of Latino/as in government's executive positions and boards and commissions is well below the representation of Latino population of the state and there continues to be significant under-representation; *and*

WHEREAS, Other cities, such as Washington, D.C., have established similar offices to support their Latino and Caribbean communities, and have seen positive outcomes in terms of increased civic engagement, improved access to city services, and strengthened community partnerships; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the possibility of creating an Office of Latino and Caribbean Affairs in the City of Boston. Representatives from the Mayor's Office of Equity and Inclusion, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Advancement, and Language and Communication Access as well as other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.

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