



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 420

Resolution declaring November 11 as Polish Independence Day in the city of New York.

By Council Members Holden, Van Bramer, Gjonaj, Ulrich, Vallone, Rivera, Kallos, Lander and Constantinides

Whereas, In 966, Duke Mieszko I, who ruled several Western Slavic tribes, consolidated his power and symbolically created the state of Poland; and

Whereas, In 1025, Boleslaw I, the son of Duke Mieszko I, established the Kingdom of Poland by expanding the region's territory and expanding the influence of Christianity; and

Whereas, The BBC states that up until 1772, Poland went through different regime changes, including being ruled by: the kings from the royal line of Mieszko from 966 to the end of the 14th century, the elected kings of the newly created Polish-Lithuania Commonwealth in the late 1500s, the Polish Golden Age's newly formed democratic monarchy in the 16th century, and outside influences from Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and the Ukraine in the mid-17th century; and

Whereas, The Encyclopedia Britannica indicates that the election of Stanislaw II August Poniatowski in 1764 resulted in political and social reform, which followed in civil war and 3 major partitions of Poland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria; and

Whereas, In 1795, due to the civil war and partitions, an Independent Poland ceased to exist; and

Whereas, After Poland lost its independence, there was a complete lack of public political activity, however, after years had passed, Polish nationalism and the fight for Polish Independence began to grow rapidly; and

Whereas, The Adam Mickiewicz Institute notes that from 1795 to 1918, there were many uprisings and

armed protests for Polish Independence, such as the Kosciuszko Insurrection in 1794, the November Insurrection in 1830 and the Uprising of January in 1863; and

Whereas, According to the BBC, from 1864 to 1914, the Polish national movement, in the then-partitioned Poland, shifted focus from armed protest to strengthening what was left of Poland through education, culture, and political parties, which fostered social reform and pushed for stronger advocacy for Polish Independence at the courts of the enemies of former Poland; and

Whereas, On November 11, 1918, due to World War I's end and the subsequent changes to Europe's political map, Poland regained independence and was restored as a country; and

Whereas, Since regaining independence in 1918, Poland has been involved in numerous important events, including: being invaded by Nazi Germany in 1939 which began World War II; being forced to adopt communism by the Soviet Union as the People's Republic of Poland in 1945; the Solidarity movement in the 1980s that resulted in the deterioration of communism and the establishment of the Third Polish Republic; and becoming a recognized role model for countries that experienced political transformation after the revolutions of 1989; and

Whereas, Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicates that Poland has celebrated Independence Day since 1920, with November 11 receiving the status of a state holiday in 1937; and

Whereas, According to data from the American Community Survey, there are approximately 200,342 people of Polish ancestry within New York City; and

Whereas, New York City is often called America's most Polish town, with many Polish restaurants, markets, and cultural institutes existing within the city; and

Whereas, Along with the culture, New York City has also recognized and celebrated Polish history, including its' commemoration of exemplary Polish leaders, such as Casimir Pulaski with the 80th annual Pulaski Day Parade on Fifth Avenue, and Tadeusz Kosciuszko with the naming of the Kosciuszko Bridge which connects Greenpoint, Brooklyn, often called Little Poland, to Maspeth, Queens; and

Whereas, Declaring November 11 as Polish Independence Day in New York City will strengthen Polish-American pride, while commemorating the anniversary of the restoration of Poland's independence in 1918 and Poland's rich history; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York declare November 11 as Polish Independence Day in the city of New York.

LS#6220
4/5/18
KK