



**BYRON SIGCHO-LOPEZ 盧漢士**  
**25TH WARD ALDERMAN (25區區長)**

Office of Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez  
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May 20, 2021

Good afternoon Cook County Commissioners,

As Alderperson of the 25th Ward and a co-sponsor of the City Ordinance to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day for Chicago, I strongly encourage you to support this resolution (#21-0565).

The vast majority of ALL of your constituents support this holiday name change, Latinx, Black, Asian, Native and White, including many hundreds, probably thousands, of Italian-Americans who know the true history of their great ancestry, which has nothing to do with lies told about Columbus.

Did you know that in 1500, Columbus wrote in his log: "there are plenty of dealers who go about looking for girls; those from ages nine to ten are now in demand." I DO NOT want any children in Cook County learning about Columbus as a "hero" when he sold young girls into sexual slavery.

We need to remember Columbus never set foot on what is now America and he did not "discover" the new world. Millions of Indigenous peoples were inhabiting the lands hundreds of years before his 1492 lost voyage. Any credit given him should start and stop with his sailing achievements only. Columbus was the beginning of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Any Cook County Commissioner in favor of Juneteenth, and who stands for racial equity MUST vote in favor of this resolution.

History has whitewashed Columbus' enslavement, rape, mutilation and murder of Indigenous People and promotes the myth he was a noble explorer. He was far from noble if one reads his own journals which outline his cruelty and violence to the Indigenous population. Most classrooms did not and still do not teach the destruction of settler-colonialism starting with and following his voyages.

It's time for the myth of Columbus to end as well as the holiday in his name. His encounters with Indigenous peoples were not respectful, peaceful, Christian or noble. The erasure of Indigenous peoples and the start of their genocide begins with Columbus and no one like him should be honored or immortalized.

Please stand with me and my 12 fellow Alderpeople who've co-sponsored this ordinance for Chicago, the thousands of Cook County residents, and over 130 organizations, including United Working Families, the People's Lobby, the Chicago Teacher's Union, and SEIU-HCII, who have signed on thus far in calling for the renaming of Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples' Day for Cook County.

Sincerely,

Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez