



COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE®
Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America®

219 E Street, N.E. • Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 547-2900 • (202) 546-8168 (FAX) • www.osia.org

MEMORANDUM

To: OSDIA Supreme Council
OSDIA State and Subordinate Lodge Presidents
CSJ Board of Directors, Voting Members, and State Chairs

From: Robert M. Ferrito, President, Commission for Social Justice

Date: September 21, 2022

Subject: Call to Action! Columbus Day Letter to President Biden

Dear Brothers and Sisters

President Biden's office has ignored an outreach from Italian - American organizations around the country, asking him to preserve and respect Columbus Day.

We have been asking for over 11 months. He has met with other ethnic groups all over the country. We are only asking for the same respect extended to many other organizations.

I ask all State Presidents and CSJ members to please get this out. I ask all to please send the attached letter to the White House. See the letter attached below.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Ferrito
President, Commission for Social Justice
Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America

Greetings everyone!

It's time to fight for Columbus and preserve our ancestors' history.

Read the letter (in black font below), follow the four simple steps, make your voice heard, and forward this email to your peers!

Step 1: Open this link — <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>

Step 2: Click Message Type and select “Contact the President”

Step 3: Fill in your name, phone, email address and street address

Step 4: Copy the letter (below) and paste it into the “What would you like to say?” field. Then, click SEND!

To President Joseph R. Biden:

PRESERVE OUR HISTORY, HONOR THE FEDERAL COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY

Last October, the Italian American community at large expressed its concerns over a pair of proclamations issued by you. The proclamations implied that Indigenous Peoples Day should be celebrated on Columbus Day, even though the entire month of November is duly recognized as Native American Heritage Month, and August 9th is recognized as the international celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day.

The first national Columbus Day proclamation, recognizing the 400th anniversary of the landing of Columbus in the New World, was signed in 1892 by President Benjamin Harrison as a way of easing tensions between America and Italy after 11 innocent Italian immigrants were lynched in New Orleans. Thousands of people witnessed and cheered on the carnage; it was the largest lynch mob ever to assemble on U.S. soil.

By celebrating both holidays on the same day, you’ve promoted the culture of one group at the expense of another. This of course is not a demonstration of a unifying policy, but rather something less. Italian Americans request separate holidays on separate days, enabling us to properly observe and honor our proud heritage and history, as well as allowing Indigenous People to honor their heritage.

For the past year, the Conference of Presidents of Major Italian American Organizations has requested a meeting with you to resolve this issue. I ask that you show our community the same respect that you’ve extended to so many groups in our country and meet with the COPOMIAO leadership to resolve this issue.

Learn more about COPOMIAO, and its Member Organizations, here: <https://copomia.org>

Thank you for your time.