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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture (NMPRAC) was founded and incorporated by the Boricua community of Humboldt Park in Chicago in 2000, serving as a cultural home dedicated to preserving, promoting, and celebrating Puerto Rican arts, history, and identity; and

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WHEREAS, NMPRAC became the only museum in the United States exclusively dedicated to Puerto Rican arts and culture outside of Puerto Rico in 2014, further solidifying its role as a national institution; and

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WHEREAS, NMPRAC stands as a beacon of cultural pride, showcasing the extraordinary contributions of Puerto Rican artists from the island and across the diaspora and amplifying their voices and histories through exhibitions, education, and community engagement; and

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WHEREAS, NMPRAC's national impact is evident in the tens of thousands of visitors it welcomes each year from all 50 states, the island of Puerto Rico, and numerous countries around the world; and

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WHEREAS, NMPRAC is led by former 26th Ward Alderperson and lifelong public servant Billy Ocasio, who erected the world's

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1 largest monument to a flag, the Puerto Rican Flags of Steel, on
2 Paseo Boricua on January 6, 1995, with the monument serving as
3 a tribute to the Puerto Rican diaspora and as a symbol of
4 pride, resilience, and cultural sovereignty; and

5 WHEREAS, The iconic Paseo Boricua Flags of Steel, each
6 standing 55 feet tall and 56 feet wide and weighing over 40
7 tons, stretch across Division Street and form a monumental
8 gateway that proudly marks the heart of Chicago's Puerto Rican
9 community; and

10 WHEREAS, The Paseo Boricua Flags of Steel monument has
11 achieved its 30th anniversary, marking three decades of
12 cultural affirmation and community empowerment on January 6,
13 2025; and

14 WHEREAS, NMPAC will celebrate its 25th anniversary in
15 September 2025 along with the museum's beloved Barrio Arts
16 Fest, an annual celebration of Puerto Rican creativity and
17 cultural expression; and

18 WHEREAS, That same month, NMPAC will host its 5th Annual
19 Puerto Rican Engage Conference, convening Boricua leaders,
20 artists, and institutions from across the diaspora to fulfill
21 its national mission; the conference will culminate in its
22 12th annual Raices Gala, honoring artists whose deep roots and

1 lifelong dedication have enriched our communities; therefore,
2 be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
4 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the
5 National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture (NMPRAC) and
6 the vibrant Puerto Rican community of Chicago for their
7 enduring commitment to preserving Boricua heritage, uplifting
8 cultural identity, and inspiring future generations; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That we commend Billy and Veronica Ocasio, the
11 NMPRAC Board of Directors, the museum staff, and all of its
12 devoted supporters for their visionary leadership and tireless
13 efforts in advancing the museum for 25 years and the
14 monumental Paseo Boricua Flags of Steel for 30 years.