

## **"Italian Heritage Month" in Maryland (Legislation - HB0117) - IN FAVOR 3/11/2025**

It was a sad 4th of July in 2020 for the Italian American citizens who helped build the City of Baltimore, MD. The beautiful Statue of Christopher Columbus, the Great Admiral of the Ocean Seas, was destroyed by a mob and thrown into the inner harbor while the police were told to stand down and do nothing. We weep, fellow Americans, because it is not "Columbus" they're after; it is our American way of life. Particularly our Italian Heritage.

Does any law-abiding citizen think that this should be tolerated or excused? Who can tell us that this is not a hate crime against the Italian Americans who donated all the funds to build this statue and the gift the statue to the City of Baltimore under the condition that the City would maintain it "forever?" Respectfully, we submit that the Italian American community should not have to restore nor replace our statue; we should not have to replace anything. Is it not illegal to destroy public property? That statue, loved by so many, despised by so few, cost a lot of money and to replace it would be a considerable amount more. It was a gift to the city from Italian Americans under the condition that the city would maintain it "forever" . . . "forever" ended on the Fourth of July five years ago . . .

It doesn't matter what someone's "opinion" is about Columbus - this was not the perpetrators statue to destroy, this was not their property to do with as they pleased. "They didn't build this!" We Italians build statues, we don't tear them down. Here is what must be done: 1. This violent behavior and destruction must stop now. 2. All those who actively participated in the destruction of the Columbus statue must be identified, arrested, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The time to mourn is over, and the state should take legal action against those responsible for this crime. **3. In the interim, the state could start by making October "Italian Heritage Month!"**

Long after these insignificant barbarians are gone on to their eternal consequences, the name of Christopher Columbus, the Great Admiral of the Ocean Seas, and Italian American Heritage will be remembered with pride and honor, despite all their efforts to besmirch his memory with "fake history." We request that all men and women of goodwill support us in bring these criminals to justice and holding the city responsible for its negligence in this matter. We also respectfully request that the Maryland State Legislature designate October of each year "Italian Heritage Month!"

**Marc A. De Simone, Sr., Ph.D.**

**Chairman of the Board of Governors, The Italian American Civic Club of Maryland, Inc.**

P.S. For those who want to know the truth about Christopher Columbus, and how we got to this situation, we recommend the book, "Debunking Howard Zinn" [https://www.amazon.com/Debunking-Howard-Zinn-audiobook/dp/B07RQW9WG8/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?crid=1G8WLO78FMBL&dchild=1&keywords=debunking+howard+zinn&qid=1593983011&s=books&srefix=Debunking+Howard+Zinn%2Cinstant-video%2C162&sr=1-2](https://www.amazon.com/Debunking-Howard-Zinn-audiobook/dp/B07RQW9WG8/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1G8WLO78FMBL&dchild=1&keywords=debunking+howard+zinn&qid=1593983011&s=books&srefix=Debunking+Howard+Zinn%2Cinstant-video%2C162&sr=1-2)