

MEMBER'S RESOLUTION

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 08, 2021

**TITLE: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRIME
MINISTER'S APOLOGY FOR THE INTERNMENT OF ITALIAN
CANADIANS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

FROM:

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua

Whereas, Canadians of Italian origin have made and continue to make an extraordinary contribution to nation-building in Canada; and

Whereas, despite this contribution, the Government of Canada interned hundreds of people of Italian heritage during the Second World War solely because of their ethnic origin. In addition, tens of thousands of Italian Canadians were declared "enemy aliens" and subjected to significant pain, hardship and discrimination. The Government's actions seriously undermined the fundamental values Canada was fighting for during the Second World War; and

Whereas, Bill C-302, Italian-Canadian Recognition and Restitution Act, was first introduced in the House of Commons in 2007 to recognize the injustice that was done to persons of Italian origin through their "enemy alien" designation and internment during the Second World War and to provide restitution and promote public awareness and education on the history of Italian Canadians; and

Whereas, on May 27, 2021, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued a formal apology in the House of Commons for the internment of Italian Canadians during the Second World War; and

Whereas, the Italian Canadian community represents more than 30 per cent of Vaughan's culturally rich and diverse population. After English, Italian is the most spoken language in Vaughan; and

Whereas, in 2012, the City of Vaughan signed economic cooperation agreements with the Province of Milan and the City of Rome, which represent two of Italy's leading business centres; and

Whereas, the City of Vaughan has formally signed 'Friendship and Twin' agreements with Italian cities, including Sora (1992), Delia (1998) and Lanciano (2002). These social and cultural partnerships are maintained and strengthened through the activities of Vaughan's active and dedicated community groups; and

Whereas, the City of Vaughan proclaims every June as Italian Heritage Month, and further recognizes this observance by raising the Italian Flag in the City Hall Courtyard as well as organizing special programs and events;

It is therefore recommended:

1. That the City of Vaughan acknowledge and accept the Canadian Government's apology for the internment of Italian Canadians during the Second World War; and
2. That the City's Corporate and Strategic Communications department promote the passage of this resolution on the appropriate corporate communications channels; and
3. That this resolution is shared with Prime Minister Trudeau, Premier Ford, York Region Council, local MPs, local MPPs, and the National Congress of Italian Canadians.

Attachments

1. Prime Minister Trudeau's [apology](#)