

PROCLAMATION

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA

WHEREAS, by 1776 nearly 300,000 Irish nationals had emigrated to the American colonies and played a crucial role in America's War for Independence; and

WHEREAS, five signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Irish descent and three signers were Irish born; and

WHEREAS, Irish Americans helped to fashion a system of governments for our young Nation and twenty-two Presidents have proudly proclaimed their Irish American heritage; and

WHEREAS, in 1792 Irish born James Hoban provided the architectural plans for the White House and served as one of the supervising architects for the construction of the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Irish born Commodore John Barry fought the last sea battle of the American Revolution off the coast of Florida and was recognized by the United States Congress in September of 2002 as the "First Flag Officer of the United States Navy"; and

WHEREAS, in 1813 Irish American Captain Oliver Perry achieved a major naval victory in the Battle of Lake Erie; and

WHEREAS, in 1942 the five Sullivan brothers made the ultimate sacrifice for democracy and freedom during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal and later had the Destroyer USS Sullivan commissioned in their memory; and

WHEREAS, the Irish first came to Spanish "La Florida" in the 1500's, first as missionaries and mercenary soldiers and then as planters, traders, businessman, doctors and administrators, culminating in three Irish military officers being appointed as Governors of Spanish "La Florida"; and

WHEREAS, Father Richard Arthur, an Irish-born priest from Limerick who was appointed as parish priest for St. Augustine in 1597 and ecclesiastical judge of "La Florida", established the first public school in America and opened it to both boys and girls of all races; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Jackson, whose family came from County Antrim, served as Florida's military governor following its acquisition by the United States; and

WHEREAS, Irish Americans, since America's inception, have provided and continue to provide leadership and service to this nation's political, business and religious establishments;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Marion County, Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in us do hereby proclaim that **March 2025** be known as "**Irish American Heritage Month**" in Marion County, Florida, and celebrate the rich cultural heritage and the many valuable contributions of Irish Americans.

DULY PROCLAIMED this 5th day of **March 2025**.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA**

KATHY BRYANT, CHAIRMAN

CARL ZALAK, III, VICE CHAIR

MICHELLE STONE, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

CRAIG CURRY, COMMISSIONER

GREGORY C. HARRELL, CLERK

MATT MCCLAIN, COMMISSIONER