

Madam Chair, members of the committee, my name is Charles Michael Prignano, Major, United States Air Force, Retired. I thank you for the opportunity to present to you my opposition to this Bill.

The citizens of our state and this country celebrate Christopher Columbus every day of the year by the fact that more than 147 cities and landmarks bare his name – in one form or another – including our own nation’s capital: Washington, DC. DC – District of **Columbia**. Do the sponsors of this Bill intend to rename each and every one of these cities and landmarks including our nation’s capital? What’s next on their agenda? Our State Flower?

“Columbine” comes from the same **European** Latin word for “dove” from which Columbus’ last name is derived. Will the sponsors of this Bill change our State Flower?

Will the sponsors of this Bill demand that the Catholic lay organization – The Knights of **Columbus** – change their name?

If I may, I would like to address myself to the sponsor of this Bill.

Mr. Salazar, if I were Hispanic, as you are, and I did not treasure my **European** heritage as much as I treasure my Native American heritage, I would change my **Spanish** name and no longer speak **English**. Mr. Salazar, you have a unique opportunity, sir

-because of your education and career as an attorney;

-because of your European & Native American heritage; and

-because of your position as an elected official, you have a unique opportunity to unite not only two peoples & two cultures, but two continents – two worlds. Instead, you’ve chosen to divide. My heart hurts for you, Mr. Salazar, because it must be hard to hate your history and heritage. I pray that God softens your heart, sir.

Ladies and gentlemen of the committee, I respectfully submit to you that everything we do here today is a monumental waste of your time and our tax dollars, because Columbus Day is a **National** Holiday and has been since 1971. Moreover, I should not have to inform Colorado State legislators that Columbus Day started right here in Colorado, when back in 1907 Colorado’s only **Hispanic** state senator at that time - Casimiro Barela - sponsored a Bill designating October 12th “Columbus Day”. Casimiro Barela chose to unite, not divide.

I thank you for this opportunity to speak; I thank you for listening; and I respectfully urge you to reject this Bill in its entirety. Thank you.