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*5151  
written*

**Dunne, Cynthia**

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**From:** Frank Travisano <travfrj@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 25, 2013 2:17 AM  
**To:** Dunne, Cynthia; Urso, Maureen  
**Subject:** Proposed H.B. 5151

To the Members of the GAE Committee:

I am writing to you today to ask that you support H.B. 5151, An Act Recognizing Italian and Italian-American Heritage Month (October). As some of you may know this is the third year in a row that this Bill has been introduced in the Legislature.

This Bill has the support of UNICO National, the largest Italian American Service Organization in the United States. There are 15 UNICO Chapters in Connecticut. This organization was founded in Waterbury in 1922 and I am a proud member of the Waterbury Chapter as well as a member of UNICO'S national Anti Bias Committee. Our Committee's mission is to fight the constant offensive stereotyping of Italians as mobsters and/or no class ignorant buffoons in the media. Polling sponsored by the Order of the Sons of Italy of America revealed that over half the teenagers in America associate Italians with organized crime.

If this Bill is passed our organization, along with other Italian American organizations around the state could use this month to help promote positive, true stories of our Italian Heritage and to educate the public about the many important contributions that Italians have made to this country. Italians are the fifth largest ethnic group in the United States and the recent census revealed that Connecticut has the largest percentage of person of Italian Heritage of any state in the United States. Therefore we of UNICO think it is only fitting that the month of October, long associated with the celebration of Italian culture and heritage, be officially designated as such.

If this Bill was passed and implimented it would not cost the State of Connecticut one red cent. UNICO Chapters around the state as well as other organizations such as the Sons of Italy would take it upon themselves to hold various celebrations and educational programs in our towns and schools.

Thank you for your consideration.