A Proclamation

Whereas, The French language is spoken by 274 million people in more than 80 countries and on five continents; and

Whereas, March 20th is the International Day of La Francophonie, celebrating the bond between francophone regions around the world and their shared values of democracy, human rights, cultural diversity, and solidarity; and

Whereas, The speaking of French is an expression and affirmation of a people’s cultural identity; and

Whereas, A strong francophone presence has existed for centuries in Massachusetts, from the first French explorers along the coasts of North America, the strong 19th and 20th century French-Canadian immigrant community, to today's thriving francophone immigrant population from Haiti, Vietnam, Senegal to name only a few; and

Whereas, Many institutions and places in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, such as Faneuil Hall and the Paul Revere House, bear French names, while others, such as the Boston Public Library and Commonwealth Avenue, are strongly marked by the culture and architecture of francophone countries; and

Whereas, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts created in 1965 the American & Canadian French Cultural Exchange Commission recognizing the importance and influence of the French language and Franco-American heritage; and

Whereas, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is home to tens of thousands of French speakers who contribute positively on a daily basis to the lives and livelihood of all citizens; and

Whereas, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts values its strong historical, cultural and economic relationship with the francophone world; a relationship driven by common goals and values; and

Whereas, The Month of La Francophonie will take place during the month of March, 2019, offering Massachusetts residents the opportunity to celebrate and discover the French language.

Now, Therefore, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim the month of March, 2019, to be,

FRANCOPHONIE MONTH

And urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this twenty-second day of February, in the year two thousand and nineteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-second.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

KARYN E. POLITO
LT. GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts