

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 474

Recognizing the significance of May 2012 as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month and the importance of celebrating the significant contributions of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 24, 2012

Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. INOUE, Mr. REID, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the significance of May 2012 as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month and the importance of celebrating the significant contributions of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

Whereas the United States joins together each May to pay tribute to the contributions of generations of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders who have enriched the history of the United States;

Whereas the history of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States is inextricably tied to the story of the United States;

Whereas the Asian-American and Pacific Islander community is an inherently diverse population, comprised of over 45 distinct ethnicities and over 100 language dialects;

Whereas according to the United States Census Bureau, the Asian-American population grew faster than any other racial or ethnic group over the last decade, surging nearly 46 percent between 2000 and 2010, which is a growth rate 4 times faster than the total United States population;

Whereas the 2010 decennial census estimated that there are 17,300,000 United States residents who identify as Asian and 1,200,000 United States residents who identify as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, making up nearly 6 percent of the total United States population;

Whereas the month of May was selected for Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States on May 7, 1843, and the first transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869, with substantial contributions from Chinese immigrants;

Whereas the year 2012 marks several important historic milestones for the Asian-American and Pacific Islander community, including the—

- (1) 20th anniversary of the formal establishment of Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month;
- (2) 30th anniversary of the unpunished murder of Vincent Chin;
- (3) 70th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of Japanese-Americans;
- (4) 100th anniversary of the planting of the first cherry tree in Washington, DC from Japan;

(5) 130th anniversary of the enactment of the Act entitled “An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese”, approved May 6, 1882 (22 Stat. 58, chapter 126); and

(6) 150th anniversary of the enactment of the Act of July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489, chapter 120), which promoted the construction of the transcontinental railroad;

Whereas section 102 of title 36, United States Code, officially designates May as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month and requests the President to issue each year a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities;

Whereas the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, a bicameral caucus of Members of Congress advocating on behalf of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders, is composed of a record high 41 Members in 2012;

Whereas today, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders are serving in State legislatures across the United States, in States as diverse as Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Utah, and Washington;

Whereas the commitment of the United States to diversity in the judiciary has been demonstrated by the nominations of high-caliber Asian-American and other minority jurists at all levels of the Federal bench;

Whereas there still remains much to be done to ensure that Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders have access to resources, a voice in the Federal Government, and continue

to advance in the political landscape of the United States;
and

Whereas celebrating May 2012 as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month provides the people of the United States with an opportunity to recognize the achievements, contributions, and history of, and address the challenges faced by, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate recognizes—

2 (1) the significance of May 2012 as Asian-Pa-
3 cific American Heritage Month as an important time
4 to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian-
5 Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the
6 United States; and

7 (2) that the Asian-American and Pacific Is-
8 lander community enhances the rich diversity of, and
9 strengthens, the United States.

○